



TORY RUSH FOR NEW CANDIDATE

BY LEE WATTON

THE Conservatives are facing a race against time to replace disgraced candidate Afzal Amin.

The former army officer has resigned over accusations he was trying to work with the far right English Defence League.

Officials said Mr Amin 'jumped before he was pushed' as candidate for Dudley North, as on Tuesday he would have been facing a meeting with party officials in London.

By stepping aside he has left the Tory party needing select a new candidate by April 9, the day nominations close for the General Election.

Conservative opposition leader on Dudley Council, Patrick Harley, has already ruled himself out of the race insisting he would concentrate on helping Mike Wood hold on to the party's seat in Dudley South.

Damage

He said: "Afzal Amin has let himself down, he has let the party down and he has let down the volunteers who have helped him over the past two years."

"At least party members in Dudley can now get on with the task of finding a replacement and repairing the damage his actions have no doubt done."

Mr Amin was accused of conspiring with the English Defence League to announce a phoney march over plans for a new £18 million mosque in Dudley.

The protest, which was never intended to take place, would be called off with the 40-year-old from Smethwick taking the credit for defusing the situation.

Mr Amin, who denied the allegations and stressed his plan was for 'very normal conflict resolution, confidence-building measures', was suspended from the party.



Conservative Afzal Amin caught on camera at a meeting with the EDL at a London restaurant where he discussed a bogus march

DISASTER

Black Country manager is killed in French plane crash

A TIPTON businessman was among the victims of the Germanwings Airbus 320 plane disaster in the French Alps.

Father-of-two Martyn Matthews, aged 50, from Old Hall Park in Wolverhampton, was travelling to a meeting in Germany after a business trip to Barcelona when the jet crashed into a mountain on Tuesday, killing all 150 people on board.

Mr Matthews was a quality manager at Tipton-based automotive firm Huf UK, part of the German-owned Huf Group.

He leaves children Jade, 20, and Nathan, 23, as well as his wife, Sharon, aged 48.

A mother from Manchester and her baby son were also revealed to be victims of the disaster, as was a man from Hull.

SKILLS

£1.4m funding cuts impact on college jobs and courses

UP TO 30 jobs are at risk and around 1,000 fewer places will be available to adult learners after a £1.4 million cut in funding to Dudley College.

College bosses say they are 'exceptionally disappointed' by cuts from the Government's Skills Funding Agency for courses at the college.

Health and social care courses, as well as early years training delivered in the workplace, are among the courses affected.

Others are giving skills to help people referred to the college from Jobcentres and the prison service.

Officials say the reduction in learners will result in a 'restructure' of college staff in the areas where the Government has withdrawn funding.

VIOLENCE

More arrests made after trouble at FA Cup derby clash

DETECTIVES investigating violence that marred the FA Cup clash between Aston Villa and West Bromwich Albion have questioned six men.

They all voluntarily attended police stations across the West Midlands following a CCTV appeal to trace 11 suspected of being involved. While two more men will be quizzed in the coming days.

Police said they were still working to identify a further three people suspected of being involved.

Those questioned so far include a 50-year-old from Great Barr and a 20-year-old from Coventry - both accused of storming the pitch before the final whistle - and a 19-year-old from Rowley Regis in connection with a bottle throwing incident.



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2 CONTENTS

LETTERS	7
MEMORY LANE	8
AREA FOCUS	20
THE FAST TICKET	21
TV	25-27
PROPERTY	29
MOTORING	31
SPORT	39-40
CONTACT US	

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Work starts on £5m museum project

THE first stage of work ahead of the construction of a new £5 million glass museum in Stourbridge has begun.

The site of the former Stuart Crystal factory in Wordsley will be transformed into the visitor attraction which will celebrate the town's glass-making heritage.

Developers are waiting to hear the outcome of a bid for £2.15m from the European Regional Development Fund towards the project, with the rest coming from grants.

While they wait preparatory groundworks and an archaeological

dig have now got under way on the site where the old White House Glass Cone once stood.

The museum, which will have a modern glass front, is to face the Red House Glass Cone. It is due to open in 2016, and will also pay homage to its past with a striking light sculpture representing the old White House Glass Cone.

The scheme will create 23 jobs and it is hoped the museum will attract more than 500,000 visitors per year.

Treasures

It will showcase the borough's glass

treasures and highlight the area's heritage through interactive displays.

Graham Fisher MBE, trustee for the British Glass Foundation, which is working with the developer, said: "In anticipation of everything coming together funding-wise, preparatory groundworks and an archaeological dig have been commenced at the White House site in Wordsley."

The proposals, put in by Complex Development Projects Ltd, also include 18 apartments built on a separate part of the site and 11 commercial units.

Lynn Boleyn, secretary to the trustees of the British Glass Foundation, said the development would complement the other attractions in the region, including the Black Country Living Museum, Red House Glass Cone and the canals.

She added: "It is going to be a major visitor attraction. They are still waiting for the formal confirmation of the European Regional Development Fund funding, but they are expecting that by the end of the month. The demolition work has already started on the site."

Concern at latest shop plan for a pub car park

A CONVENIENCE store creating 20 jobs will be built on a pub car park, under proposals, after developers ruled out calls to transform a rundown shopping parade.

New River Retail has submitted plans to create the Co-Operative Food store on the car park of The Ashwood Inn, in Wordsley.

The firm is behind similar proposals at the sites of several pubs across the Black Country after brewery Marston's sold off 202 pubs in a £90 million deal.

Similar proposals have sparked campaigns to save pubs including the Haden Cross Inn, in Cradley Heath, and The Hare & Hounds in Wollescote.

Under the Wordsley proposals, New River Retail say the store would be built on the car park of the Ashwood Inn, fronting Sandringham Place.

There would also be 14 car parking spaces created for customers while a further 14 spaces would remain for the pub.

Campaigners had called on the firm to rethink the proposals and instead site the store at a neighbouring row of shops that has three empty units.

Ward councillors Derrick Hemingsley, Glenis Simms and Paul Brothwood have been in talks with the firm.

Disappointed

Councillor Hemingsley said: "I'm disappointed in their comments on the empty shops. I'm going to call a public meeting to hear residents' views."

NewRiver Retail spokesman Martin Hughes said: "Given the size and layout of the shop units in the parade, they would not meet the needs of the intended operator."

"We are aware that this is some local concern about the vacant shops in the parade opposite the proposed site for the new convenience store. We think that the creation of a modern new retail unit will enhance significantly the prospects of the parade being regenerated."

"The plans have the full backing of the landlord of the Ashwood and the proposed store will provide an attractive and modern facility offering more choice to local shoppers."

Medal presented to RAFA stalwart



With John Deane is the Mayor of Dudley Councillor Margaret Aston and Lord Lieutenant Mr Paul Sabapathy CBE

POPPY Day stalwart John Deane, who was awarded a British Empire Medal (BEM) in the Queen's New Year's Honours, was presented with his award at a special ceremony hosted by the Mayor of Dudley.

John Deane, aged 78, from the Dudley branch of the RAF Association, had his award officially presented to him by the Lord Lieutenant Paul Sabapathy CBE at a ceremony in the Mayor's parlour on Thursday.

The RAF veteran plays a key

part in the borough's civic calendar including Dudley Council's Remembrance Day and Armistice Day services.

He was also runner up in last year's Mayor's Civic Awards Mayor's award.

Mr Deane, from Kingswinford, said: "I was thrilled to be given this honour and have my sister to thank for nominating me. I get real pleasure from the work I do for the RAF Association and in the community generally."

For more than 50 years Mr Deane has been working with Dudley Royal Air Force Association, working tirelessly to promote the association, raise funds and remind the community of the hugely important role our armed forces have.

He served in Iraq and Cyprus during his national service in 1955-57, and now works with Air Training Corps inspiring young people across the borough.

He was joined by distinguished guests for the medal presentation.

Fetish club application is rejected a second time

PLANS for a controversial fetish club in Dudley have been thrown out for the second time.

Councillors were divided over the scheme with the rejection coming by the committee chairman's casting vote.

Those opposing the plan said they felt the Dock Lane location was not right for the Valhalla Club and denied it was moral judgement.

The club, which would serve the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community, was refused permission in December last year but owners had made a renewed bid for a change of use.

Planning officers had recommended the proposals be approved but Dudley Council's development control committee refused the application at a meeting on Thursday.

Councillors were level at four votes against and four votes for the application, with committee chairman Councillor Qadar Zada having the casting vote.

Limited

Councillor Zada said he supported all groups having representation inside Dudley but felt the location was not right for the club, and did not believe there was sufficient parking.

"This is not a moral debate," he said. "I cannot support the application with the impact it would have on the residents living on Dock Lane."

"In my heart I am a supporter of this application but in my head I can not see how a club with such limited parking could operate."

Psychiatric ward smoking ban plan

PSYCHIATRIC patients who are not allowed to leave hospital grounds will be banned from smoking there under new plans by an NHS trust.

Patients in South Staffordshire and Shropshire are currently allowed to smoke in the gardens of individual wards.

But this would be banned from October and patients will instead be supported to give up.

Hospitals in the Black Country still allow smoking in gardens but bosses say they would consider a ban in future.

South Staffordshire and Shropshire NHS Foundation Trust has facilities for people with mental health problems including St George's Hospital in Stafford.

Smoking is already banned for staff and visitors in its hospitals and grounds.

Pipe work to close road for 12 days

A ROAD will close for 12 days while work to improve gas pipes takes place in May.

School Lane in Hagley will close from its junction with A456 Birmingham Road and Hall Meadow. It will be shut from May 15.

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New staff means blood test waiting is reduced

WAITING times for blood tests in Dudley borough should be reduced after the service was expanded.

Patients are being given more choice over where they can have a blood test, following concerns over the amount of time it was taking for them to be seen.

The Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust has started offering blood tests for the first time at Guest Outpatient Centre, in Dudley. Patients can walk in from 8am to 1pm, five days a week.

The trust is also expanding the service at Corbett Outpatient Centre, in Stourbridge, which offers a walk-in service five days a week from 8am to 6pm. It is in the process of hiring six additional staff to take blood tests.

In January it was reported that people had to wait an average of 30 minutes to be seen by a phlebotomist, although at busy times it could take up to an hour.

The improvements to the service will include more blood test stations and waiting areas.

Dr Alec Wolinski, clinical director for diagnostics at the Dudley Trust, said: "We are pleased to be able to offer blood tests at all three of our hospital sites, which will not only offer patients more choice but allow them to be seen more quickly at Corbett or Guest. The additional staff at Corbett will not only help to reduce waiting times but also allow us to introduce a booked appointment service for people who need to fast before a blood test in the near future."

Douglas Graham dies in hospital

A LEADING West Midlands businessman has died in hospital after a short illness. Mr Douglas Graham, Chairman of the Claverley Group, which is



Mr Graham

the parent company of the Express & Star and The Chronicles, died on Saturday evening in the Princess Royal Hospital, Telford.

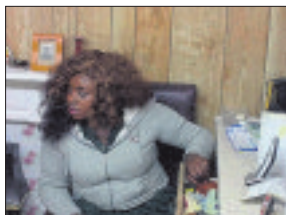
He succeeded his father, Mr Malcolm Graham, as chairman of the group in 1993. A keen motor enthusiast, Mr Graham lived in Worfield and was a life member of the British Racing Drivers' Club.

He is survived by wife, Sara, and funeral details are to be announced.

Ferret racing and falcons at event

A DAY of countryside activities for families is being run at the County Museum at Hartlebury Castle. Country Capers on Easter Monday, from 11am, includes archery, falconry displays, ferret racing and donkey rides.

Carer locked up for 'despicable' theft



Caught in the act — Sheryvone Brooks

A CARER who stole from the 85-year-old woman she was supposed to be looking after has been locked up for 26 weeks.

Sheryvone Brooks, aged 20, was caught on CCTV taking £30 from Evelyn Nicholson. Wolverhampton Crown Court was told that the camera had been installed in the kitchen of the house in Stourbridge just six days earlier because her family feared cash was going missing.

Mr Geoffrey Dann, prosecuting, said: "The footage shows the defendant opened a drawer, take out the

purse and put the money in her track-suit top."

Brooks, of Foxmeadow Close, Sedgley, who was one of a team of carers from Dudley's Gateway Heath and Social Care looking after Mrs Nicholson, pleaded guilty to a single offence of theft involving £30.

Shame

Mr Jason Aris, defending, said: "It was a very unpleasant offence and the shame she feels is all consuming."

Brooks, who had no previous convictions, fought back tears as she was

sent to a young offenders institution. Judge Martin Walsh told her: "This was a mean and despicable offence."

"It is not the value of the property involved that is important in this case. It is the nature of the relationship between you and the elderly person you were required to provide care for. This was a gross breach of trust."

"People in the profession you were part of must understand that offending of this kind committed against elderly people in their own home will result in the offender being sent into custody."

MP challenges Home Secretary on police cuts

A DUDLEY MP has demanded that the Home Secretary intervene over cuts to the police force.

Dudley North MP Ian Austin raised the issue in person with Theresa May at a Home Affairs Select Committee meeting last week.

He said that Government cuts would result in the loss of 2,500 police officers and that the West Midlands deserved a 'fairer share' of funding.

More than 2,500 jobs on the force will be axed in the next four years in a bid to save an extra £100 million, on top of £126m which has already been cut.

Mr Austin had presented a letter signed by 15 MPs calling for the cuts to be examined again. The home secretary acknowledged the issue 'needs to be looked at'.

The West Midlands has the second lowest council tax precept, which is used to fund policing, in the country. This means it relies more on central government funds than other forces.

According to Mr Austin, the system the Government uses to distribute police funding means West Midlands Police receives a smaller share than other forces — despite higher levels of crime.

Due to this, flat-rate national cuts hit the West Midlands harder with West Midlands Police set to lose a quarter of its budget, he said.

Seriously

"The home secretary acknowledges that West Midlands police funding is a problem, but she needs to take this much more seriously," added Mr Austin.

"We all know savings have to be made but the Government has cut spending too quickly and too deeply. Failing to introduce a fairer funding system is costing the West Midlands millions. Given that our crime rates are higher, with more serious threats to the community, this simply isn't fair."

"Police officers are losing their jobs, police stations have closed and Dudley Police Station is still at risk. Local people want more police on the streets, more offenders brought before court and more criminals put in jail."

Mrs May replied: "I think the question of how police funding is distributed will have to be something the government looks at. I am certain we will look very carefully at that."



Former Junior Apprentice star Ben Fowler, 19, celebrates opening his latest coffee shop on Hagley Road, Hayley Green, near Clent

Success brewing at Ben's new cafe

YOUNG Apprentice star Ben Fowler is smelling the coffee with the opening of his second cafe after his first venture proved a success.

The 19-year-old from Rowley Regis has opened his new business in Hagley Road, Hayley Green, as he aims to launch 10 shops within 10 years.

His first shop in Halesowen, which specialises in buffets, has a turnover of £1,600 a week. The cafe employs four and his other business has three employees.

Mr Fowler said: "It is on a busy main road. There are a lot of people walking by and it is just on the doorstep of Clent and there is parking available."

He added: "We are constantly looking to expand and my long-term plan is for 10 shops within 10 years."

The teenager was the second contestant to be kicked off the Young Apprentice 2011 by entrepreneur Lord Alan Sugar after his team flopped in the mother and baby task.

However, he said he had learned valuable lessons from his time on the show.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Machete attack on man in park

A MAN suffered serious arm injuries after being attacked with a machete in a Kingswinford park.

The 25-year-old was assaulted in King George VI Park.

Earlier in the evening police believe he and some friends were involved in an altercation at the Royal London bar, in Wulfruna Street, Wolverhampton. The victim was later attacked in the early hours of Saturday morning in the park and paramedics treated him in Kingswinford High Street at 2.10am. Police are appealing for information, call 101.

Nearly 130 council jobs have been cut

NEARLY 130 jobs have been axed at Dudley Council over the past year with bosses warning of more cuts to come over the next 12 months.

Officials from the authority this week revealed a total of 127 voluntary redundancies had been authorised.

While there had been no compulsory redundancies, bosses said these figures were likely to change as the authority continues to make savings.

The council needs to claw back £22.1 million during the current financial year rising to £24.3 million in 2016/17 and £26.3 million in 2017/18.

Marine in court over Villa violence

A ROYAL Marine has appeared in court in connection with violence which erupted at a match between Aston Villa and West Bromwich Albion earlier this month.

Matthew Jon Fox, 27, of Penfields Road, Stourbridge, pleaded not guilty to a charge of assaulting a police officer at the game at Villa Park on March 7. Fox, a serving Royal Marine who has completed four tours of duty in Afghanistan, was bailed until June 12 by Birmingham Magistrates Court.

College students get dog agility lessons

STUDENTS of animal care at Halesowen College learned about how to train a dog during a special session.

Two agility dogs and trainers, Lauren Morgan with Deafer and Luanne Ellis with Reg, gave a demonstration for students. Students saw the training techniques used for obedience and agility work. Julie Nightingale, of Halesowen College, said: "The students really enjoyed the session which will help them with their theory and practical tasks for their assignment."

Comic Relief cash

MORE than £7,000 was brought in for Comic Relief by two supermarkets. Sainsbury's stores in Ambleside and the Merry Hill shopping centre raised £7,163 for Red Nose Day with pupils from Withymoor and Brierley Hill primary schools telling jokes over the public address system.

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THE BEST OF PETER RHODES



ONE of the best comments I have seen on the Clarkson "get me steak!" fracas was a brief letter in the Independent from someone who had watched surgeons emerging from operating theatres in the early hours. Having saved lives, they expected nothing more than a sandwich.

Caitlin and Caroline Moran's sitcom about growing up in Wolverhampton has had mixed reviews, praised by TV critics but rubbished in the blogosphere. I didn't watch it all but Raised by Wolves (C4) seemed stuffed full of clever lines which must have looked brilliant on paper but didn't survive the transition to the screen. It is a profound mystery of television comedy that the most beautifully crafted and original gags sometimes fail to make us laugh. Many sitcoms, from Fawlty Towers to The Office, get off to a shaky start and then suddenly take off. Give it time.

THE gay Italian designers Domenico Dolce and Stefano Gabbana declare that "the only family is a traditional one" and that the children of same-sex parents are "synthetic".



Elton John disagrees thundering: "How dare you refer to my beautiful children as 'synthetic'? And shame on you for wagging your judgmental little fingers at IVF." So far, so good. I happen to agree with him and a robust exchange of views is the essence of a civilisation based on freedom of speech. But then Sir Elton goes over the top by signing off: "BoycottDolceGabbana." A clutch of celebrities join his campaign. Supposing this boycott took off globally and D&G's income fell sharply. When a company has a cash crisis, the first to suffer are the employees. So how many lowly designers, cutters and embroiderers would have to lose their jobs before Sir Elton's rage was satisfied? Celebrities have enormous influence and a boycott can be a terrible, blunt weapon. After the Charlie Hebdo tragedy, I thought the civilised world had re-stated its belief in freedom of expression. That means the expression of all views, not merely those we happen to share.

Don't miss Peter Rhodes every Monday to Friday in your Express & Star

Borough hit by more cases of scarlet fever

CASES of scarlet fever in the Black Country have more than trebled in a year, new figures reveal, and Dudley has the highest number of cases in the region.

Since September there have been 235 people diagnosed with the infectious disease — 106 of these reported in Dudley. Between September 2013 and March 2014, there were 73 cases across the region.

By Heather Large

The rise in the number of patients has been mirrored across the country but Public Health England says the reason for the increase is not known.

Health experts said this was the time of year the highest number of scarlet fever cases are normally seen but they are likely to tail off after a few weeks.

But there had been an 'exceptional' number of cases for the second year in a row.

Increase

Scarlet fever is more common in young children leaving sufferers with a sore throat, headache, fever and pinkish rash on the chest. The rash can spread to other parts of the body. The majority of cases remain reasonably mild, treated with a course of antibiotics.

The number of patients with the illness in Dudley, which has by far the highest in the region, is up from 18 during the last season. In Sandwell 51 people have

fallen ill, up from 12. There have been 32 cases in Wolverhampton compared with 29 in 2013/14. In Walsall the number has risen from 11 to 23.

Dr Theresa Lamagni, from Public Health England, said: "We're continuing to see a considerable increase in the number of people diagnosed with scarlet fever across England. Given that the scarlet fever season should peak within the next few weeks, we should see a reduction in numbers soon."

"The reasons behind this increase are unclear but may reflect long-term natural cycles." "As scarlet fever is highly contagious, children or adults diagnosed with scarlet fever are advised to stay at home until at least 24 hours after the start of antibiotic treatment," added Dr Lamagni.

Rufus stars at pub pop-up gig



Rufus Hound at Belly Laughs Live Chichester Festival

TOP comedian Rufus Hound is performing in a Halesowen pub as part of a series of pop-up comedy gigs to raise funds for the Help for Heroes charity.

Marston's Pubs has teamed up with whisky brand Bell's for the Barrel of Laughs campaign, which will see comedians and famous faces take on a one-off challenge to roll a barrel of Bell's whisky throughout the UK. The event starts from the Blair Athol distillery in Scotland and ends up at the Help for Heroes recovery centre, Tedworth House, in Wiltshire.

The comedy shows are taking place in Marston's pubs along the route, including The Fairfield Inn in Fairfield Road on Sunday. Supporting Rufus Hound will be comics Ben Briggs, Wayne Beese, Michael Crump and Andrew McBurney.

Mark Carter, of Marston's Pubs, said: "Help for Heroes is such an inspirational charity, we're proud to be working with them this year on this activity as well as selling Marston's Help for Heroes beer on our bars."

HSBC is to move 1,000 jobs to Brum

INTERNATIONAL banking giant HSBC is to move 1,000 jobs from London to Birmingham as its sets up the new head office for its UK banking business in the West Midlands.

The world's second largest bank is taking a 250-year lease on a new 210,000 sq ft office block that will be built as part of the £400 million Arena Central development in the city centre.

The legal documents are due to be signed in the next few days, with work starting on the site in June.

HSBC says it will start moving jobs from its base in Canary Wharf to Birmingham in 2017.

The operation being moved to the West Midlands is its 'ring-fenced' British retail and commercial banking business.

Regulations

New regulations that come into force in 2019 mean all the UK's big banks have to split their ordinary banking operations from their riskier investment banking, to protect taxpayers from having to bail out the banks again.

Antonio Simoes, chief executive officer of HSBC UK, said: "We have been looking at options for the head office of our ring-fenced bank for some time. It became clear to us that Birmingham would be the right location."

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Charnelle Francis seen in action at Portway Lifestyle Centre



Back: Naomi Harris, Michelle Badger, Clare Newns, Sam Brown, Vanessa Lee, Jessica Hoult, Libby Davoren.
Front: Lauren Mills, Chloe Jones, Charnelle Francis, Jemma Nelson, Natalie Talbot, Stephanie Palmer



Libby Davoren from Great Barr and Chloe Jones



Naomi Harris in the thick of it versus the Lions



Clare Newns seen as part of the Steelers' team

Steelers' resolve to boost team

THE hard tackling and high impact collisions of American Football are attracting a growing female following in Sandwell.

Now one team in the area is seeking new members interested in playing the exhilarating contact sport every other Saturday.

The Sandwell Steelers women's team was started a year ago and currently boasts 18 players, though more recruits are being sought to help swell numbers so the team can

play in 11-a-side games instead of the current five-a-side.

Libby Davoren, aged 23, one of the team's players, said new members did not have to have played the sport before and could come along for a free trial at one of the team's training sessions at Portway Lifestyle Centre in Oldbury on Wednesdays and at Tipton Sports Academy on Sundays.

She said players did not have to be a specific size or age as there were plenty of positions suited to people of different builds.

She added: "It is not every girl's cup of tea, but there are a lot of women's rugby teams

about and we do have all the protective gear so it is very safe."

She said there were a lot of tactics involved with the sport and the team spends an hour a week discussing what runs they were going to make. "It is an interesting sport. Everyone just thinks it is really violent, but it is not. It is all about footwork and technique and being in the right place," Miss Davoren added.

The 23-year-old, who lives in Great Barr, said the women's team was started by Lauren Mills and is linked to the Sandwell Steelers men's team, which currently has between 50-60 players, which is the number the wom-

en's team is aiming to achieve. The women play in the British American Football Association's Midlands group, which includes teams from Manchester, Derby, Leeds and Birmingham.

However, Miss Davoren said the best teams in the league were the Birmingham Lions, who beat the Steelers 86-0 recently.

The Sandwell team did have more success in their other game on Saturday, beating the Chester Romans 26-18.

The club's treasurer, Stuart Potts-Perkins, said although the game itself has been growing in popularity in the UK for around 30

years, the women's game is currently growing exponentially.

"The women's game is growing incredibly fast," Mr Potts-Perkins, aged 46, of Troon Road, Wordsley, said. "The ladies team at the club started only last year and already we have 17 dedicated players and they have accomplished a lot."

Last year, two of the players on the women's team, Lauren Mills and Vici Rollinson, were selected to participate in the national team in a match against Sweden. For more information or to join pop along to a training session or visit www.sandwellsteelers.com.

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IN MY VIEW
with Mark Andrews

MP hopeful feels heat in curry meet

AHOY! Shiver me timbers, you land-locked lubbers, and mark this day in your diary. September 19 is International Talk Like a Pirate Day, where oddballs across the world with too much time on their hands – and presumably no jobs – spend the entire day talking like Long John Silver. And presumably, when the BBC will start filming the second series of Poldark.

IN a scandal straight out of Alan Bleasdale's classic political satire GBH, would-be MP for Dudley North Afzal Amin has been forced to resign before the campaign has even started after being caught on tape plotting with leaders of the far-right English Defence League.

Apparently, the idea was that the EDL would threaten to disrupt business for Dudley's beleaguered traders by staging another one of their delightful demonstrations, but that it would be called off at the last minute by Afzal, the Black Country's knight in shining armour. If this is true, he really has been watching too much television.

You do wonder why they chose a curry house to draw up their bizarre meeting though. While there is a delicious irony in a couple of EDL hard men politely asking for more poppadoms to go with their chicken madras, you would think that a student of politics like Afzal would have remembered the infamous plot to unseat Tony Blair which was said to have taken place at Wolverhampton's Blash restaurant.

Plots hatched in curry houses do not have a terribly high success rate.

IF they really wanted a cutting-edge dining venue to plan for the forthcoming election, they would have done better to have headed down to Swindon, Wiltshire, where chef Kathryn Beale has come to the attention of the authorities for knocking out a tasty line in placenta smoothies.

What's not to like? The 41-year-old puts a fist-sized fleshy piece of afterbirth into the blender before chilling it overnight. The next day she mixes it fresh bananas, blueberries, strawberries and apple juice, and there you go, bish, bash, bosh, the job's a good'un, £25 to you madam. Puk-ka.

But while that might sound quite delightful to luvvies in the south, I'm not convinced the Black Country is quite ready to embrace the placenta smoothie, or any other smoothie for that matter. Nah, we want something a little heartier, with a bit of meat on it.

Placenta scratchings? Now you're talking.

THE euro is in meltdown. Most of mainland Europe is locked in recession, nervously waiting on tenterhooks to find out whether Greece will default on the massive debts it has racked up.

Meanwhile, the European Commission is to vote on whether to proceed with a proposed ban of halogen light bulbs in 2016, or delay the phase-out until 2018.

Good to see they're concentrating on the bigger picture.



Transformation work on the hotel's presidential suite



The resort casino including the sports bar area under way



Operations Director Barry Clemo at the new Resorts World

£150m resort is on track for summer

Hotel, spa and discount brand names stores are on their way in this £150m development, as Charlie Benton explains

WORK at a £150 million shopping outlet and resort destination is steaming ahead.

The Resorts World project, which is being built on the NEC campus near Birmingham, will feature everything from discount brand-name stores to a hotel and spa.

Bosses at Genting UK, which is building the project opposite the Genting Arena, which it sponsors, said the project is on track for completion by summer.

Although there is some scaffolding still visible, the impressive glass fronting along the front of the building is complete, with integral structural work now complete.

Inside, the building is now water-tight, with workers focusing on areas such as the four-star hotel rooms and shop spaces on the ground floor.

Discount

The five double-storey building will feature 50 discount outlet brands, 12 restaurants, with Pizza Express and TGI Fridays already signed on, five bars, a late night lounge and nightclub, an Asian-themed spa as well as a four-star boutique hotel.

There is also a casino, a futuristic conference centre and a purpose-built IMAX cinema with 11 screens.

Barry Clemo, resorts operations director, said the project will be a huge boost for Birmingham.

He said: "Resorts World is a leisure and entertainment hospitality brand, and we have eight other destinations throughout the world including Singapore, Malaysia, New York and one still to be completed in Las Vegas.

"The other resorts are bigger but they do have the space, what we have tried to achieve here is bring the essence of what Resorts



The exterior of Resorts World, under construction at the NEC site in Birmingham

World is all about but do it in a way that fits on the campus, so whilst it is not as big as the others, there is a hell of a lot in there.

Mr Clemo, who has worked at Genting UK for four years, said the building is unique in that although there are other places like it, none of them combine all of its working parts under one roof.

With structural work complete, a major fit-out has begun, with main sub-contractors Galliford Try continuing work on several parts of the huge resort and other sections, such as the IMAX cinema, being handed off to other contractors.

Mr Clemo said: "There could be anything up to 600 people a day working on site at any one moment, it is a massive project and we have estimated around 1,700 jobs have been created during the course of the build, and that is just construction.

"When we open roughly 1,100 full time jobs will be created.

"We are looking to pull from the local area to fill these roles. We have already advertised and recruited some senior roles in the management offices and casino, although it is still early days.

"There is a huge opportunity here but we

are going to have to get out to market and let people know. Apart from the jobs, there is significant investment, that brings with it business opportunities.

"When you think of the location, near to the airport, the M42, the M6, it is just a great destination venue."

Alongside the cinema space, which is being leased by Cineworld, almost 80 per cent of the rest of the building has been leased by tenants, according to Mr Clemo.

"This is outlet shopping so this is all about great high street brands at heavily discounted prices, that is the draw. The brands will come here because it is the only outlet of its type in the country."

The International Convention Centre, which is part of the NEC Group, is leasing the Vox conference centre, which can seat up to 1,000 people and be divided up from an open space into several rooms at a moment's notice.

Mr Clemo said he is excited for the fast approaching completion date, which he believes will be some time in the summer.

"Nothing in the UK, or Europe for that matter, has all these moving parts under one roof. That is the unique proposition of Resorts World, that is what we do around the world," he said. "This allows you to just turn up, park your car, and relax, just build your own event. Take each bit and put it together to make an occasion for yourself.

Exciting

"There is £150m worth of investment and to be involved with the project is pretty cool. Even if I did not work for Genting, having this on the doorstep, I would be coming here.

"It allows me to bring my wife and my daughter, park up, have a fantastic time and just enjoy ourselves, all under one roof. It is totally unique and totally exciting."

Mr Clemo said Genting UK has a positive relationship with the NEC Group and the project will benefit both sides.

Martin Clarke, marketing director at the NEC, said: "The opening of Resorts World will transform the NEC site into a 24/7 destination, which will not only have a positive impact on the region's economy and job market, but will also enhance the visitor experience."

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Lutley Lane litter never been worse

WE refer to the recent letters regarding the amount of litter along Lutley Lane. We have used Lutley Lane over a period of 50 years. The state it is in at the moment is absolutely horrendous.

The amount of litter has increased enormously over the past few months. The final straw was to see not only a water butt discarded but also a settee!

Cowards sneak out at night to dispose of their rubbish so no one can see their faces. Something must be done. I understand the road is to be closed on May 17 to enable a

community clean-up. We have noticed that two expensive signs have recently been put up to mark a 30mph speed restriction, so can it be arranged for some 'No Tipping' signs to be erected? If they can state that fines would be involved that would be even better?

Another option would be cameras, which would be better still. There is no reason why Lutley Lane could not give the appearance of a pretty Devonshire lane.

GEOFF AND ANN STUBBINGS
Halesowen

High cost of clean-up

A RECENT report brands England as a litter-ridden country that is far worse than any of its European counterparts.

Much of the litter is plastic bags, fast-food packaging and drinks containers. The cost of the clean-up is £850m per year, a figure that has not reduced in recent years. This cost falls on cash-strapped councils and ultimately on council tax.

From October, there will be a charge on plastic bags, similar to charges introduced already in Scotland.

This cost should be borne by the vendor, not the consumer. There should also be a deposit on drinks containers and, once again, the cost should fall on the vendor.

At present, the supermarkets make more profits by introducing single-use containers and just add the cost to the price of the article.

R TABERNER
Oldbury

Error to allow new predator

I READ with interest and some amazement that lynx are to be re-introduced into the UK after more than a thousand years. The reasoning is that the introduction of a top predator will control the deer population.

With the steady decline of wild habitats across the UK, how long will it be before the lynx realise that there are easier pickings to be had from our farmyards, dustbins and rabbit hutches? It won't just be rabbits and chickens that would be targeted. A lynx will see little difference between a lamb and a young deer. Anything smaller or weaker than an Alsatian will be fair game.

It's not that I am against creating a greater diversity in our wildlife. It's the fact that there is such an incredible intolerance towards foxes and badgers that it seems crazy to introduce an even more efficient killer.

I can visualise a few years down the line that the 'povs' that be' will decide that lynx culling would be a good idea

S CLARKE
Stourbridge

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

POST

Dudley Chronicle,
Chronicle Editorial,
51-53 Queen Street
Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES

EMAIL

dudley.chron@
expressandstar.co.uk

Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

What about the work that husbands do?

I OFTEN wonder whether I'm on the same planet as some people whose articles I read in local and national newspapers, but one article made me fume with anger.

In a national newspaper the headline was Mums should be paid £172,000 per year for their skills and the work they do.

The article explains that mothers rack up 119 hours of unpaid work a week, on average.

This includes such hourly rated tasks as housekeeper £11.53, head chef £16.83, teacher £17.79, psychologist £47, chauffeur £12, entertainer £30, personal shopper £12.02, personal trainer £20, lawyer £48.98 and nanny £10.58.

This implies that the

mother is not working but the husband is. However, as an ex-husband with three daughters, the article also implies that during the time that I was married as well as holding down a full time 42 hour per week job, I never cooked, cleaned, did laundry, interacted with the children, never shopped, never undertook any bill payments and couldn't be bothered to drive the children to various activities.

I did all those things, as do most men who have a family and a full time job, and I resent the implication that the mother's tasks and responsibilities outweigh my own.

M WHITEHOUSE
Brierley Hill

Tax increase a possibility

WITH regard to the question about the freezing of the council tax by Dudley Council, the Government for some years now has offered additional financial incentives to councils in return for not raising council tax bills. So in theory councils do not lose out.

Keeping council tax levels in check has always been a priority for the Conservatives and is one way of achieving a certain amount of control. If Labour come to power in May, we could well see our council tax bills start to rise again.

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The ECC cricket team in the 1960s



The tool department at the company in 1908



A large generator leaving the ECC Bushbury Works



The children's sports day in the 1960s

City is no stranger to electric vehicles

ELECTRIC vehicles are appearing more and more commonly on our roads, and Jaguar Land Rover have recently announced that they too are to begin making them at a new factory in Austria.

The No 1 bus route in Wolverhampton has also pioneered new hybrid buses. The city is no stranger to electric vehicles, the Electric Construction Company in Bushbury built an electric car as early as 1896.

They had already started manufacturing electric buses five years earlier, and built the first tram for Birmingham in 1888.

MEMORY LANE

By Alec Brew

The company had been formed as Elwell and Parker in 1882 by Thomas Parker and Paul Bedford Elwell, making dynamos and other electrical equipment in a factory in Commercial Road, fittingly next to the site where the town's power station was to be built.

Important

The company grew quickly and a new factory, covering 28 acres was built in Bushbury in 1892.

After their foray into electric vehicles, ECC concentrated mainly on manufacturing

generating equipment, and became one of the largest and most important employers in Wolverhampton.

Among the notable achievements for the company was building the electric engine for the pioneering submarine Nautilus.

Their employees were well looked after with a large sports and social club, with a host of different sports teams, and annual social events.

The club still operates in Showell Road, though the company suffered the same fate as so many of the large firms in Wolverhampton which have disappeared over the years.



The cover of the ECC quarterly magazine, Institute News

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I'd put money on a hung parliament

DANIEL WAINWRIGHT
Political Editor

DAVID Cameron is apparently the Prime Minister people want, it's his party they seem to be turning away from.

At least that's the way the latest poll reads for one of the key marginal constituencies in the Black Country.

Tory peer Lord Ashcroft's team asked people in Halesowen and Rowley Regis who they were voting for.

In 2010 they dumped Labour in favour of Conservative James Morris. Now it looks like his Labour opponent Stephanie Peacock is pulling ahead, just. She's on 39 per cent to his 37. So it's still all to play for.

What proved far more interesting was one of the follow-up questions.

Pleased

People were asked if they were satisfied with the job David Cameron was doing, whether they were dissatisfied with him but preferred the Tory leader as PM to Ed Miliband or whether they'd rather have Ed Miliband. The largest number, 31 per cent, were pleased with Mr Cameron.

Another 29 per cent were not but wanted him over Mr Miliband. Just 29 per cent wanted the Labour leader as PM. This means there are a lot of people prepared to vote Labour anyway even though they are not particularly keen on Mr Miliband.

Similarly there are UKIP supporters there who are not prepared to drop the Eurosceptics in favour of what they may consider to be the lesser of two



George Osborne – vision

evils in Number 10. My own speculation, fuelled by my irritation at so many interviews with front benchers refusing to answer what I believe to be a fundamental question in this election: Who will you do a deal with?

Labour won't go into a coalition with the SNP. But it hasn't ruled out the so-called 'confidence and supply' arrangement where it might offer the SNP incentives to back it on key votes. The Tories may look to woo UKIP if it wins enough seats to make any difference or even try to come up with a new coalition with whatever remains of the Liberal Democrats.

The only thing I'd be prepared to put any money on is that it is going to be another hung Parliament.

George Osborne set out a vision for a Northern Powerhouse during his



Lord Ashcroft –questions

last Budget before the election. He promises that Greater Manchester will be allowed to keep 100 per cent of growth in local business rates and was delighted by plans for it to have an elected mayor.

Meanwhile in the West Midlands, four whole months on from the announcement that there would be a combined authority, the Black Country is still drawing lines in the sand over the name (not Greater Birmingham, for crying out loud!) and insisting there will be no 'metro mayor'.

Essential as it is to get these things cleared up, it does show just how far behind the West Midlands is compared with its northern neighbour and the expanding south east. If our politicians aren't careful, the West Midlands will be the 'squeezed middle' Ed Miliband used to talk about.



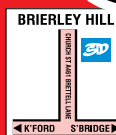
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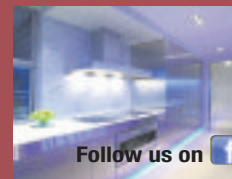
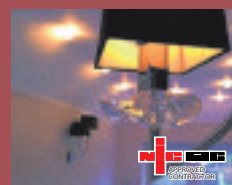
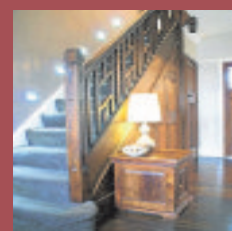
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David's quids in with new coin design



Queen Mary's Grammar school pupil David Pearce, aged 15, from Highgate, with his winning £1 coin design

A WALSALL schoolboy has created a design that will be used by millions. David Pearce, aged 15, has coined the design for the new £1 – and was told the news by Chancellor George Osborne.

The Queen Mary's Grammar School pupil, of Highgate, triumphed over more than 6,000 entries in a national competition. The new currency will launch in 2017.

Because of its 12 sides and bi-metallic design, the coin will be the most secure in circulation in the world.

David's design features a rose, leek, thistle and shamrock emerging from

a Royal Coronet symbolising all four countries of the UK, England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. It will feature on the 'tails' side of the coin with the traditional image of the Queen on the reverse.

The youngster, who wants to enter a career in designing later in his life, said he could not believe his drawing had been chosen.

"I was really excited to hear that I had won the competition to design the new £1 coin but hugely shocked as well," he said. "I spent a lot of time researching what coin designs looked like and what sort of designs would

represent all parts of the UK before submitting my idea and I honestly cannot believe I have won."

The coin is being replaced for the first time in more than 30 years because of its vulnerability to counterfeiters.

Mr Osborne, who invited David to Downing Street to celebrate the success, said: "Designing the new £1 coin was a brilliant opportunity to leave a lasting legacy on what will be the most secure coin in circulation anywhere."

"David's winning design will be recognised by millions in the years ahead."

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Revolution
in denture provision

A CHAMPION for denture wearers, Steven Burchell DipCDT RCS(Eng) has spent more than ten years campaigning to "break the taboo over false teeth and prove that high-quality dentures can indeed be nothing short of life-changing."

Evangelical about what new-generation denture prescriptions can achieve, he says the palette of solutions to deliver a more youthful, engaging smile has never been so great, with traditional, high-quality handmade-on-the-premises prosthetics; suction diaphragm dentures; and implant-retained over-dentures.

"People have come to us with ill-fitting teeth, sunken cheeks and

pinched lips and we have been privileged to transform their looks, providing teeth that not only are aesthetically pleasing and hugely functional, but also successfully support facial structures just like their real teeth once did. It can take years off people."

Can dentures ever be glamorous? "Emphatically, yes," adds Steven.

Strident advances in technology, improved materials and revised clinical procedures are all helping "to drive the denture revolution forward and indeed introduce a real sense of natural-looking glamour to what can be accomplished," he says.

Suction solution

is this the answer for you?

A CUTTING-EDGE development that helps to resolve the stability problems faced by thousands of denture wearers is being offered by the Denture Clinic.

Steven Burchell Dip CDT RCS(Eng) GDC108353, who heads the teams at his North Street practice in Dudley, and other clinics across the region, says the invention has the potential to resolve all-too-common denture stability issues.

Prosthetics are held in place by tiny valve-operated suction devices which are built into the prescription. A clever diaphragm principle, triggered by bite pressure on patients' gums, creates a 'sucking' vacuum between the soft-tissue mouth lining and the prosthetic.

Steven, whose clinics attracts patients from as far as Spain, the Isle of Skye and the Isle of Anglesey, says: "In recent times we have seen, what I can describe only as strident clinical steps forward, with implant-retained over-dentures, 'teeth-in-a-day' implant procedures and suction solution dentures, all coming into main-stream dentistry. "We also have clever injection moulding



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"Implant dentistry as a resolve for stabilisation issues is not suitable for everyone, neither is it all patients' first preference. The Ultra Suction

prosthetics system offers a possible alternative clinical solution.

"The beauty of this affordable technology is that it can deliver for the right patient excellent denture retainer qualities without the invasive clinical procedures required for implant work."

Lower dentures can often be troublesome when stability is compromised by shrinking gums and bone erosion – all part of the natural ageing process. Ill-fitting dentures create painful friction problems on gums and not least, can be a regular source of embarrassment.

Reduction

Steven adds: "The device can be mounted on upper or lower teeth and because of its efficiency allows us to consider a reduction in the size of the acrylic 'plate' which can improve speech and taste."

"We have always endeavoured to be on the very cusp of clinical development and this is another 'tool' in our commitment to always try to deliver outcomes greater than patient expectations."

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Denture Clinic

Special role for veterans on Armed Forces Day

VETERANS can apply to receive special medals and badges at this year's Armed Forces Day celebrations.

An event will be held at the prestigious Himley Hall and Park on June 28 to celebrate the work of servicemen and women.

The event will run from 11am to 5pm and will include a presentation of medals and badges including the HM Armed Forces Veterans Badge by the Mayor of Dudley to veterans living in the borough.

Councillor Margaret Aston, Mayor of Dudley, said: "The highlight of every Armed Forces Day is recognising the contribution of veterans when their badges are presented."

"We especially want to hear from servicemen and women who are entitled to or have already been sent their HM Armed Forces Badges to have them officially presented during the day's formal proceedings. The day really is a highlight in the civic calendar and one not to be missed."

Helpline

The event will include a youth marching band competition, a display of historic military vehicles and children's entertainment including a zip line. There will be band performances and the spectacular Beating of the Retreat will close the event.

Anyone who thinks they are entitled to one of the HM Armed Forces Veterans Badges should call the Veterans UK helpline on 0808 1914 218 or email SPVA-VeteransBadges@mod.uk or veterans-uk@mod.uk to apply.

Veterans need to have applied for and received their badges in order to have them presented on the day. Those who served on the Arctic convoys and in Bomber Command can also apply for their badge by calling the Veterans UK helpline. Anyone who has received one of the badges but not had it formally presented to them can contact (01384) 818186 to be part of the ceremony.

Health shadow's GP pledge



Shadow Health Secretary Andy Burnham, MP for Leigh in Greater Manchester, speaking outside Russells Hall Hospital this week

HUNDREDS of additional GPs are being promised to the West Midlands under Labour's proposed 'mansion tax'.

Shadow health secretary Andy Burnham says he wants to create a national health and care service to end bed blocking in hospitals and ensure older people are given the right support.

He also claims that despite the pledge that health service funding would be preserved, cuts imposed by Coalition partners the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats to council budgets had hit social care

and resulted in more people seeking hospital treatment.

Mr Burham addressed union members at Russells Hall Hospital, where it is feared plans to save £12 million could see as many as 400 job losses.

He said: "I want organisations like Russells Hall to evolve into the community and take on social care staff, potentially take on GPs, to give the full range of care."

He added that Labour were committed to an 800 extra GPs in the West Midlands, funded by a 'mansion tax' on homes worth over £2m.

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People like Bruce and his wife Janet.

Marie Curie Nurses cared for Bruce in his final days and also supported Janet. She explains how this made a real difference during the toughest of times.

"I didn't think I'd ever need Marie Curie's help, but when you're suddenly faced with the death of a loved one, you can't imagine them being anywhere other than at home with you.

"Bruce and I met working in retail. He was thoughtful, fun loving and caring. He enjoyed cycling and going to the gym. We'd socialise a lot together with friends.

"We were married in May 2006 and then, in 2008, we were thrilled to find out that I was pregnant.

"Unfortunately, soon after we heard this happy news, Bruce was diagnosed with malignant melanoma. He had surgery and was given the all-clear just before Christmas that year.

"However, in March 2009, a week before my due date, Bruce found a lump in his armpit. He didn't tell me at the time - he didn't want me worrying until after the birth."



Doting dad

"Zoe was born at the end of March and Bruce was completely smitten with her. He was such a doting dad. Sadly, though, his cancer had returned.

"I can remember Bruce saying to the oncologist that he wanted to live long enough to walk Zoe down the aisle. I welled up with tears because I knew that five years was probably a best case scenario for us at that stage."

Back home with us

"In February 2010 Bruce came home, after spells in hospital and a week at the Marie Curie Hospice in Edinburgh. He wanted to be in his own environment with us. It made such a difference to him. We cleared out the dining room and made it into a bedroom for Bruce. Friends and family from all over the world sent him pictures and cards to decorate the walls which was lovely. Zoe could wander in and out to him at her leisure, cheerfully chattering and bringing him little toys.

"We had a super District Nurse during the week, and Marie Curie Nurses at weekends to do Bruce's medication.

"Bruce's final goal was to see Zoe's first birthday on 26 March. On the day, we got him into a wheelchair so he could come into the kitchen. We had party food and a sing-song with friends and family. It's a comfort to me that he achieved that goal."



Margaret was a rock

"Marie Curie also helped us for the last three nights of Bruce's life. We had a Marie Curie Nurse - Margaret - caring for him throughout each night.

"Having her there was an invaluable support. She looked out for Bruce but also made time to chat to the family too - she was a rock when everyone else was struggling.

"Zoe will be six years old at the end of March. She'll be opening a card from Bruce on her birthday, as he wrote birthday cards for her before he died.

"We talk about her dad all the time. For her to know that he fought so hard to be there on her first birthday is really special.

"I'll be wearing my daffodil this year so that others going through something similar can have the support that we did."

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Prison drama set to cause a stir



Bad Girls cast members From left, cast members Craig Broome, Craig Smith Amanda Payne and Kelly Plater

A THEATRE group is acting life on the tough wings of Larkhall Prison.

Members of Great Barr Musical Theatre Company are preparing to stage their version of the popular television show Bad Girls.

Having already been adapted for the West End, the story of life behind bars has been picked up by the group which has been performing for 26 years.

The show will be staged at The Old Rep theatre, in Station Street, Birmingham, from May 12 to 16.

Heading the cast is Anne Hewitt who plays Sylvia Hollamby, also known as BodyBag, the notorious female prison

officer. Other actors include Amanda Payne, who plays Shell Dockley, in a role made famous by Debra Stephenson, and Kelly Plater who takes the part of Nikki Wade.

Prison officer Jim Fenner is played by Craig Smith and fellow actor Craig Broome is another to play one of the tough guards trying to maintain order at the prison.

Just as the television series tackled hard hitting issues, the theatre production touches on a range of topics including relationships and fights.

But group spokesman Margaret Pitt, who plays old lag Noreen, says

there are lighter moments too. "It has been a great show to put together and we have been in rehearsals since around September," she said.

Tickets cost £15 and £14 for concessions. Performances start at 7.30pm each night. Call Margaret Bowyer on 0121 680 3525, visit the box office at the theatre or go to www.oldreptheatre.org.uk to book.

Group members say the company always want to try out new shows.

Their most recent production, Eurobeat, has been nominated for an award by the National Operatic and Dramatic Association.

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Big demand for tea dance tickets

A TEA dance is being staged for St George's Day and prospective dancers are being warned that tickets will sell out quickly.

Dudley Council is organising this year's event which will take place on April 25 in Halesowen in the Cornbow Hall from 1pm to 3pm, with doors opening at 12.30pm.

Tickets are available on a first come first served basis and include a free hot drink and biscuit.

To apply for tickets contact Kate Rochester-Jones on (01384) 818186 or email kate.rochester-jones@dudley.gov.uk

Mayor of Dudley, Councillor Margaret Aston said: "Tickets for the tea dance always go really quickly and I'd recommend that people interested in attending book their place now.

"This St George's Day event should be a really busy one and we hope that people from all communities join us in celebrating the day."

Tennis girl's image sparks controversy



Fiona Walker from the famous poster with an original copy

IT'S a saucy shot of a Stourbridge model cheekily hitching up her skirt while playing tennis but the iconic image sparked fury when used to promote an exhibition.

Officials at the All England Lawn Tennis Club have been forced to apologise for using the image of Fiona Walker to advertise the event at Wimbledon Lawn Tennis Museum. It prompted a volley of criticism and claims of sexism after the club tweeted a photo of the famous Athena poster from the 1970s to promote the Powerful Posters exhibition.

Following complaints, the image was deleted from the official Wimbledon account and replaced by a new post saying: "We apologise for offence caused by the Athena Tennis Girl Poster. It is a controversial piece of poster history but we do not endorse it." A spokesman said: "The image in question is from a 1970s poster that was extremely popular and sold over two million copies worldwide. It is part of an historic exhibition about tennis posters."

The woman in the picture, Fiona Walker, from Oldswinford, was an 18-year-old art student when she posed for the photo in 1976 at Edgbaston Tennis Club.

Black Country has £20 billion economy

THE Black Country is now worth a staggering £20 billion a year with more businesses than at any time in the last decade and employment at a three year high.

As the area recovers from what Chancellor George Osborne last week dubbed 'The Great Recession', the number of people in work across the Black Country has risen to 439,200 — 6,800 more in just 12 months.

That includes 68,600 employed in the key manufacturing sector, which is the highest figure for five years.

Across Wolverhampton, Walsall, Sandwell and Dudley there are now 32,085 active companies with local entrepreneurs starting up another 4,485 in 2013 alone.

For the first time, the value of goods and services sold from the Black Country has broken the £20 billion barrier.

The Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership area, including Dudley, is ranked first nationally on the proportion of surviving start-ups that reach £1m turnover.

MP comes under fire for £10 Remembrance expenses claim

AN MP has been branded 'disgusting' for claiming £10.80 expenses for travel to a Remembrance Sunday event in the Black Country.

But Chris Kelly, Conservative MP for Dudley South, said the claim was made 'in error' and the money had been paid back.

Royal British Legion members labelled his claim as 'disgusting' and a 'disgrace' after official records showed Mr Kelly received £10.80 on expenses to travel 24 miles to Remembrance Sunday in Kingswinford last year.

The claim, published by the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority, was made for the event which took place on November 9.

The authority says the claim, which was paid out to Mr Kelly, was made for 'Remembrance Sunday mileage' in his own vehicle classed as 'within constituency travel'.

Mr Kelly said: "It was a claim in error and it has been paid back already."

However, Gornal Royal British Legion member Ken Finch said: "It is nothing short of disgusting. Even if it was a pound it shouldn't happen. "This is part of the civic duties that

if you are in a public role it is your job to show some respect to remember people who fought in the first and second world wars and other conflicts. It is respect for the people who never came back."

Stan Hough, treasurer with Lower Gornal Royal British Legion, added: "It is a disgrace. Thousands of people travel a long way to Remembrance Day parades and they don't claim anything. It is part of our duties towards our own country."

The revelation comes as Mr Kelly is preparing to step down in May with Mike Wood, a Stourbridge councillor, standing as the Tory candidate.



Dudley South MP Chris Kelly

Don't depend on anti-biotics

HEALTH bosses are warning against the use of antibiotics for coughs, colds and flu. Dudley doctors say there is a general misconception that antibiotics are needed when treating minor viral illnesses.

Dudley Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) says say the best way to treat most colds, coughs or sore throats is to drink plenty of fluids and to rest.

There are fears the widespread use of antibiotics has led to bacteria becoming resistant to them.

Dr Steve Mann, clinical executive at Dudley CCG, said: "By only using antibiotics when it's appropriate to do so, we can slow down resistance and make sure these life-saving medicines remain effective.

"We now know that most coughs, colds and even ear aches get better just as quickly without antibiotics"



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Prince of Wales, Cannock
If you like your humour, gentle, observational and seen through the eyes of children, then this former schools inspector from Rotherham is your man.

Phinn's stories include all the material modern stand-up comedians use; dirty books, innuendo, drugs and bodily functions, but from the mouths of babes he collects an innocent slant on

the world inhabited by the unsullied and the trusting. There is the little girl who drew a road covered in diamonds, rubies and emeralds because it was a jewel carriageway and the boy who informed him his father was a smack-head and only to be later informed he was asthmatic.

Phinn is never preachy or sneering, he doesn't ridicule or put himself above his subjects but simply shows there is a different way of looking at

the world. Such as the girl who drew a picture of God and when Phinn informed her no one knows what God looks like her sharp reply was, they better look at my picture then.

And the prize was the lad whose maths skills Phinn tested by asking him how many sheep he could see in the field by the school, the straight-talking Yorkshire lad answered, all of them.

Danny Farragher

Seth strings together his solo show

Seth Lakeman
Slade Rooms
DEVONSHIRE folk musician Seth Lakeman is great on the guitar, brilliant on the bouzouki and fantastic on the fiddle.

There is very little with strings he can't play and he gave the audience packed into the Wolverhampton venue for his solo show a demonstration of them all.

With songs from his latest album Word of Mouth and trawling through his back catalogue, he treated the appreciative crowd to tracks such as the Bold Knight and Blacksmith's Prayer.

Lakeman switched easily between instruments and hammered all of them, especially his fiddle with the horse hair count on his bow being reduced with every number.

He laid out the emotive King & Country which he wrote for his grandfather and war veteran Jim Radford's composition, Shores of Normandy. Lakeman finished his hour of solo music with what has almost become his signature tune, Kitty Jay.

REVIEWS

Proud Paloma wallops UKIP

Paloma Faith
Barclaycard Arena, Birmingham

FLAMBOYANT songstress Paloma Faith is proud of her BRIT award, so proud that she brought it to show her fans at her first arena concert in the city.

Again the 33-year-old soul singer from Hackney dedicated her British Solo Female Artist award to all the 'graafters'.

Paloma has certainly put in the hard work, progressing from 02 Academy to Symphony Hall status before finally filling the city's mega-venue.

She's now more confident about speaking her mind, urging everyone, especially women, to vote at the General Election ('people chained themselves to railings and got beaten up, you know') and decrying UKIP.

She and her band were all descendants of immigrants, she said, so if UKIP had been in power for ten years

the last song would have been... she stepped back for a moment of silence.

But the nation's favourite retro diva, dressed in a 1960s style white and clear plastic dress, kept the emphasis on fun in a near two-hour show featuring almost all the hits from her three albums.

She opened with the club anthem Changing and highlights included Picking Up The Pieces, Stone Cold Sober, Trouble With My Baby and a soulful duet with the dynamic Ty Taylor, from bluesy support band Vintage Trouble, on Baby I Love You.

The encores included the soaring ballad Only Love Can Hurt Like This and the funky Can't Rely On You, before Paloma left the audience with her favourite song, giving a showstopping performance of Ike and Tina Turner's River Deep Mountain High.

Leon Burakowski

Carry On laughing at Guvnors

One Man Two Guvnors
Grand Theatre, Wolverhampton

THE National Theatre's frantic farce got the Grand rocking with laughter.

Based by Richard Bean on 250-year-old Goldoni romp The Servant of Two Masters, Guvnors is actually a celebration of British humour in the Carry On and Benny Hill tradition.

So there is flatulence, splastick, dolly birds and innuendo aplenty, and the hard-working cast get away with it thanks to a pervasive, knowing sense of irony.

As the greedy Francis Henshall, a part made famous by James Corden, the hyperactive Gavin Spokes was so energetic and engaging that you could overlook the far-fetched plot.

A nice touch was having a skiffle band entertain between scenes, adding to the vintage setting of Brighton in 1963.

And the show features the most outrageous audience participation you will probably ever see.

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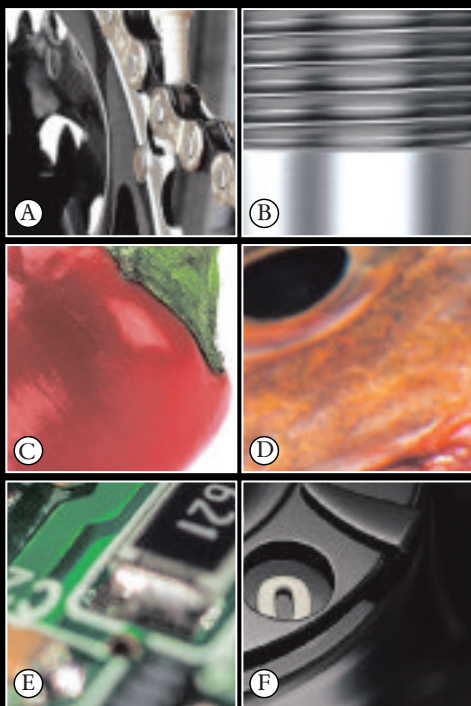
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The JUST FOR FUN Page



This weeks just for fun
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Remember, it's just for fun!

See the answers on page 39.

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Birmingham Dogs' Home has a long and notable history in the care and protection of rescuing strays from the city streets of Birmingham and surrounding towns and villages in the West Midlands.

It was founded in 1892 on land that was made available by the late Sir Alfred Gooch Bart in New Canal Street, Birmingham, and proudly displayed the heading 'Birmingham Home for Lost and Starving Dogs' above its doors, a sign that is still present on the building, having been restored by its current owners.

Almost 100 years later - in 1987 - the Duchess of York officially opened the New Bartholomew Street home, which had been purpose-built to provide shelter and protection for over 150 abandoned dogs in comfortable kennel blocks with adjacent facilities, such as its own vets' clinic, puppy unit and isolation block.

The home is a charity which can only survive through the generosity and support of the general public and

benefactors from the local community. Without this we would be unable to carry on the vital work of rescuing and rehoming abandoned dogs.

Rescued

We at Birmingham Dogs' Home are here primarily to ensure that the abandoned dogs coming into our care are rescued from their plight, reunited with owners who may have lost them or rehomed to families that will respect and nurture them.

Our **rehoming procedure** is designed and operated principally to be both practical and fair. It takes into consideration the high number of dogs brought into our homes on a daily and weekly basis as well as our desire to find the best possible home for each individual dog in our care.

The public are free to walk around our homes to view our dogs at any time during our opening hours of Monday to Saturday 11am - 4.45pm, but they should be aware that not all dogs are available for rehoming. Some are stray dogs due to be claimed by their owners while others are under assessment by our staff for either medical or behavioural concerns.

Once you have spent time with one of our dogs and are satisfied that you would like to offer the dog a home, our rehoming staff will take you through the various stages required to complete the process. No pressure is placed on anyone to offer a dog a home. We do stress, however, to anyone considering this option that they must take as much time necessary before deciding to reserve a dog in our care.

Abandoned

Your help brings hope and happy tomorrows for abandoned dogs

Fundraising is the life's blood of Birmingham Dogs' Home. Without it we simply could not exist.

With no Government funding, we survive purely through the generous contributions of the general public, interested companies, groups, organisations and kind-hearted individuals who may or may not have purchased dogs from us and have remembered us in their Wills.

Legacies and other contributions are valued beyond compare and allow us to carry on providing care and protection for unwanted dogs.

This ensures that we can continue to rescue these unfortunate animals, oversee their welfare and good health and treat any conditions with first class veterinary attention all with one aim in mind ... to see them happily rehomed to loving new families.

Our highly trained kennel team do the rest with loving pastoral care prior to their four-legged charges leaving for pastures new.

There are various fundraising routes available for those who wish to donate. Whichever, we at Birmingham Dogs' Home are deeply indebted to those of you who work so tirelessly to help us help them ...



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Jordans was established in Blackheath by John Jordan in 1990. Over the last 5 years we have trebled in size resulting in opening a second branch in Halesowen and we have three distinct departments, each headed by a specialist in that area.

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Meet the Team



Michael Jordan LLB

Michael has been with the firm since 2006 when he joined as a trainee. He is now Managing Director specialising in Residential and Commercial Property.



Baldeep Kooner LLB

Baldeep is a Wills and Probate Specialist advising on Wills, Probate, Powers of Attorney, Tax Planning and Court of Protection cases.



Brinder Khara LLB

Brinder is an Accredited Family Solicitor and has been practising in the area of Family Law since 1996. She is also a Notary Public.

Recent additions to the team include Rikki Bateman and Emma Hingley. Rikki is a Qualified Solicitor specialising in Residential Property. He is vastly experienced in all aspects of buying and selling, including New Builds and Help to Buy Schemes. Emma has joined us from a local Estate Agents. She brings a wealth of experience, which will further improve the process of Buying or Selling a property for our clients and make it a smoother and less stressful process.

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all residents to the outside Sun Terrace. We also have 2 quaint lounges which have a more private, intimate and relaxing environment, ideal for family visits and special occasions.

Yew Tree Nursing Home also has its own pets. We have Duncan the Shetland Pony, Gemma the Cat, Joe the budgerigar, John and James the Guinea Pigs and a brood of hens collectively called the Cheeky Girls. Pets often expand the sociability of older people and have a positive benefit on our residents well-being.

Yew Tree have also been awarded the 'Gold Standards Framework' in Care Homes. The GSF (Gold Standards Framework) is a systematic, evidence based approach to optimising care for all patients approaching the end of their life.



Yew Tree Nursing Home also organise day trips throughout the Spring and Summer and also have Stag and Hen Parties whenever a member of staff is getting married.

Yew Tree Nursing Home aims to provide its residents with a secure, relaxed and homely environment in which their care, well-being and comfort is of prime importance. All staff will preserve and maintain dignity, individuality and privacy of all residents within a warm and caring environment and in doing so will be sensitive to the residents ever changing needs.

For any further information or to arrange a visit please call Carol Lightwood (Home Manager) or Vicky Mills (Business Manager) on 01562 710809



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Boyfriend fails to clear his name after Chelsea's death on holiday isle

A MAN from Brierley Hill convicted of killing his girlfriend has failed to clear his name following an appeal.

Luke Walker, of Gayfield Avenue, was found guilty of causing grievous bodily harm, leading to the death of 20-year-old Chelsea Hyndman in May 2010, while the couple were living and working in Crete.

IN 2013 he was given an eight year sentence suspended after an appeal against conviction and sentence was lodged. Walker has always protested his innocence and this month returned to Crete for a hearing at Heraklion Mixed Criminal Court.

He failed to clear his name at the hearing and was instead given a three-year suspended jail sentence.

Disappointment

HIS family said he had now returned to the UK following the hearing and have said they have been left 'broken financially'.

Now his father has spoken of their disappointment after the latest court hearing, but said they are relieved the ordeal is over, two years after he was initially found guilty.

Luke, aged 27, was convicted of causing grievous bodily harm, leading to the death of Miss Hyndman following a trial in May 2013.



Luke Walker - in court



Chelsea Hyndman - died

He vowed to clear his name in a legal battle, which has proved costly for him and his family, but failed to clear his name being convicted of the charge for a second time.

His father Patrick Walker said: "We travelled back over there last week for the hearing."

"We wanted to clear his name but that did not happen. It's done now and that's it. There is not much more we can say. At least it is over. There will be no more having to travel to and from Greece."

Mr Walker said there was still an inquest to be held in this country, which was expected to take place in around 18 months time.

Mr Walker added that his son did not wish to comment. The family have previously said the case had 'broken them financially'.

Walker's solicitor Mr Georgios Pyromallis said last week's hearing had taken place before three appeal judges and four jurors.

He said it was 'rare' for a sentence to be reduced by the court in cases such as this.

Miss Hyndman's mother, Heather, has slammed the reduced sentence branding it 'ridiculous'.

She said nothing would bring her daughter back and she missed her every day.

Following the original trial, Walker slammed the hearing as a 'farce' claiming judges were laughing during the proceedings and that one juror falling asleep.

Walker was initially charged with murdering his girlfriend in the party town of Malia, Crete, where they lived together. But the allegation was downgraded to GBH leading to death.

During the original hearing, the court was told Miss Hyndman had died after she was taken to hospital with abdominal pains.

The court was also told a neighbour had often heard 'intense arguments' between Walker and his girlfriend.

Britain First group says it will march against mosque

CONTROVERSIAL right wing group, Britain First has announced it will march in Dudley in May against the planned new mosque.

The group has announced a march is planned for Saturday, May 9.

If it goes ahead, Britain First will follow in the footsteps of the English Defence League, which protested in the town earlier this year against the same mosque. That caused many shops to close and sparked a counter-protest.

Councillor Pete Lowe, leader of Dudley Council, said: "We are aware that Britain First have posted a proposed visit to Dudley on Facebook."

"We will continue to monitor this with police colleagues over the coming weeks and months, and respond appropriately if a protest is held."

The group, which was first founded in 2011 and is based in Kent, describes itself as a 'patriotic political party and street defence organisation'.

Chief Inspector Phil Dolby from West Midlands Police said: "We are aware of talk of a possible event being planned for May in the borough. Officers continue to make inquiries and will be contacting the organisers in due course to understand more about the proposed gathering."

In February, around 600 supporters of the English Defence League took to the streets, with a cost to the taxpayer of around £321,000.

Man with knife was mentally ill, court heard

A MAN who ran down a street carrying an eight-inch knife while high on cocaine called the police on himself because he thought he was being chased by killers, a court heard.

Danny Clive Smith, aged 24, was found in Brierley Hill by officers responding to the frantic phone call.

Mr John Peel, prosecuting, said that on November 17 Smith called 999 from his mobile saying that he was being chased and thought people were going to kill him.

When the police car caught up with him, he was carrying a large kitchen knife and wanted to get into the back of the car for protection.

The defendant suffered from mental health problems, according to his solicitor Mr Paul Nicholas, who told magistrates at Telford that his client was seeking treatment.

Smith, of Blews Hill Court, Dawley, had pleaded guilty to possessing an offensive weapon in a public place and harassment without violence at a previous hearing.

Cocaine

Mr Peel said Smith had later told police in interview that he had taken a lot of cocaine and had become paranoid.

The prosecutor said that the charge of harassment related to a relationship with a former girlfriend who had refused to answer calls and texts from Smith after he was released from prison.

Mr Peel said the couple had been together on and off for five years.

Despite receiving a police harassment warning on November 5, Smith continued

By Simon Stone

to send messages and was charged on December 30.

Reading a statement from the victim, Mr Peel told the court that she had become increasingly nervous as Smith's release date approached. "I was extremely scared," the statement said.

Smith was sentenced to 12 weeks in prison for carrying the knife and six weeks for the harassment, but magistrates suspended the punishment for one year.

He was given an indefinite restraining order not to contact the victim and was ordered to pay £170 prosecution costs and a £80 victim surcharge.

Mr Nicholas said Smith's calls related to the couple's daughter.

He explained Smith suffered from ADHD, paranoia, anxiety, depression and had been referred to a psychological unit for treatment.

Smith had carried the knife for his own protection and had not threatened anybody with it.

"He deserves sympathy for his problems. He should not be punished" said Mr Nicholas.

Crystal amazing fun

ACTIVITIES for children of all ages are being held at a Black Country leisure centre over the Easter holidays.

Events will be taking place at the Crystal Leisure Centre, in Stourbridge, from March 28 to April 12. Youngsters can take part in trampolining, gymnastics, arts and crafts and football games. For more information call (01384) 812800, or visit www.dudley.gov.uk/sport

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Schoolboy is robbed on train trip

A 13-year-old boy was forced to give up his mobile phone after being threatened with a knife on his way home from school.

The youngster was with three other boys — aged between 12 and 13 — travelling on a Kidderminster to Dorridge train when three men who boarded at Cradley Heath verbally abused them.

One of the men threatened the boys and claimed to have a knife, at which point the 13-year-old boy handed over his mobile phone.

The men left the train at Old Hill station and the boys reported the incident to the guard who contacted British Transport Police.

Anyone with information about the incident, on January 14, is asked to contact British Transport Police on 0800 40 50 40 or call anonymously on 0800 555 111.

Good Friday's guest speaker

THE Good Friday guest speaker at Cradley Heath Baptist Church, off Corngraves Road, will be Gordon Sumner at 11am.

The service will be followed by free hot cross buns and refreshments.

Albert Billingham, deacon at the church, said: "Everybody is welcome to the service and the get-together afterwards."

The church also holds midweek Bible study, children's groups and fellowship meetings.

FOCUS ON CRADLEY AND CRADLEY HEATH

Problem parking is driving residents' call for a ban

COUNCIL bosses plan to ban parking in a Cradley street following complaints of inconsiderate motorists clogging up the road.

The problem parkers have been plaguing Netherend Lane for years, leaving their cars on the pavement and verges.

Officials also fear the cars block the view of oncoming traffic for motorists coming out of side roads. Campaigners have called for drastic action.

Now Dudley Council is proposing to ban parking on the pavement in the road between Apperley Way and Mogul Lane.

A consultation has been launched with a decision due in the coming weeks.

It is claimed many of the vehicles parked on pavements are from a car valuing and repairs centre — which the boss of the firm denies.

Dangerous

Martin Oakley, of Netherend Lane said: "The cars are there from 8am until 6pm. Sometimes they are double parked. Sometimes you can't get out of the drive."

Councillor Richard Body said: "It is extremely dangerous to have these cars parked up like this because you just cannot see the traffic. It is a wide pavement in parts but often cars are parked opposite each other.

BY ANDREW TURTON

"We put out a letter asking asking a lot of people what they thought and they said they have had enough."

Tajamal Akhter, owner of the car wash and repairs centre, which has been at the site for eight years, said he was 'fed up' because he felt his business was being picked on.

He has now rented five or six spaces from the Netherend Neighbourhood Centre.

"From my point of view I have got five employees so if they bring in the double yellow lines it will effect the business and they will end up losing their jobs," said Mr Akhter.

He added: "It is not all us. Four or five of the cars belong to the residents. Sometimes customers park in awkward places but as soon as we have the keys we move them."



The Young Ones — some of the cast of TAB Operatic Society's Summer Holiday

Musical brings the sunshine

THE summer sun will be arriving early with a little help from a Cradley Heath-based operatic society.

The TAB Operatic Society, based at Dudley Wood Methodist Church, will be performing the stage adaptation of the hit Cliff Richard movie Summer Holiday, in which a pop star and his friends travel across Europe in a double decker London bus.

Featuring such 60s favourites songs as The Young Ones, On The Beach and Living Doll, the show will be staged daily at Brierley Hill Civic Hall all this week until Saturday (March 28), when there will be a 7.15pm performance after a matinee at 2pm.

Audrey Henwood, of the society, said a 50-strong team had been involved with the production.

To buy tickets call 07722 417962. For more information see www.taboperatic.com website.

Festival to honour key strike action

A FESTIVAL will celebrate a group of Black Country women's ground-breaking industrial victory.

The event in Cradley Heath will bring to life the victory of the women chain-makers of Cradley Heath through drama, dance, poetry and performance.

The 1910 Women Chain-makers' strike, led by Mary Macarthur and supported by the women of Cradley Heath, was pivotal in labour history. Hundreds of low-paid women won the dispute, which laid the foundations for today's national minimum wage.

A statue of the campaigner now stands in Mary Macarthur Gardens in the town.

The event will take place in Cradley Heath High Street on Sunday, July 12, from 11am to 6pm. Previous events have attracted speakers from the Labour movement.

Billy's Black Country tales

STORIES about Black Country history will feature in a night of entertainment next month.

Poet, musician and storyteller Brian Dakin will present the event under his alias 'Billy Spakemon'.

The show, called 'Three blokes, Three Chairs and a Chap Named John' takes place at The Hollybush, Newtown Lane, Cradley Heath, on April 17 at 8pm.

Email b.dakin@aston.ac.uk or text 075148 24845 for tickets.

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fast the ticket

Green Machine

Shrek the Musical
See Page 23



Nicki Minaj
preview

Page 23



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Morrissey



Friday, 7.30pm
Barclaycard Arena, B'ham
 The singer, who released his highly-acclaimed autobiography in October 2013 is arguably the most distinctive pop lyricist of his era. One not to miss.
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Derren Brown



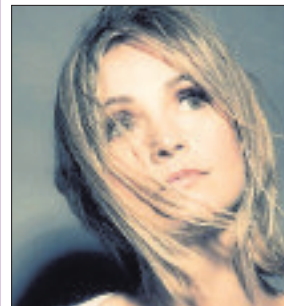
Monday - April 11
New Alexandra Theatre, B'ham
 The multi-award winning master of psychological illusion is back on tour in 2015 with a brand new one-man show which is sure to leave the audience bemused and amazed.
 Visit www.atgtickets.com

McBusted



Saturday, Sunday, 7.30pm
Barclaycard Arena, B'ham
 With the excitement of 2014's arena tour still ringing in fans' ears, and almost exactly one year on from their formation, McBusted are back for more live shows.
 Visit www.barclaycardarena.co.uk

Cara Dillon



Friday, 7.30pm
Town Hall, B'ham
 If you don't know the voice of Cara Dillon, you're in for a treat. If you are already amongst her legions of admirers you know you have something special in store.
 Visit www.thsh.co.uk

POP & ROCK

Marty Wilde
 Saturday at 7.30pm,
 £18.25 - £19.25
 Palace Theatre, Redditch,
 B98 8AE. Call 01527 65203

Battle Of The Bands - Grand Final
 Saturday at 6.30pm, £6.60
 The Wulfrun, Wolverhampton,
 WV1 3HH. Call 01902 552106

McBusted
 Saturday, Sun at 7.30pm,
 £42.89 - £47.39
 Barclaycard Arena,
 Birmingham, B1 2PZ.
 Call 0121 780 4141

Morrissey
 Friday at 7.30pm,
 £51.33 - £73.83
 Barclaycard Arena,
 Birmingham, B1 2PZ.
 Call 0121 780 4141

Ren Harvieu
 Friday at 8pm, £15
 The Glee Club, Birmingham,
 B5 4TD. Call 0871 472 0400

Bon Jovi: King of Rock Tribute
 Saturday at 7.30pm - 1am, £6
 The Arena Aldridge, Aldridge,
 Walsall, WS9 8QR.
 Call 01922 277 896

Larry Miller
 Thu at 7.30pm, £12 - £14
 The Robin 2, Bilston, WV14 7LJ.
 Call 01902 401211

Fred Zeppelin + Dizzy Lizzy
 Friday at 9pm, £10 - £12
 The Robin 2, Bilston, WV14 7LJ.
 Call 01902 401211

Liquor & Poker Band
 Saturday at 7.30pm, Free
 Katie Fitzgerald's, Wollaston,
 Stourbridge, DY8 3TB.
 Call 01384 374410

The Counterfeit Stones
 Saturday at 7.30pm, £13 - £21
 Lichfield Garrick Theatre and
 Studio, WS13 6HR.
 Call 01543 412121

Robin Trower
 Saturday at 8pm, £22.50
 Town Hall Birmingham, B3 3DQ.
 Call 0121 780 3333

Kill It Kid
 Friday at 7pm, £11
 The Slade Rooms,
 Wolverhampton, WV1 1HP.
 Call 01902 552106

Soley Mourning plus Hightale
 Saturday at 7pm, £5.50
 The Slade Rooms,
 Wolverhampton, WV1 1HP.
 Call 01902 552106

Fleetwood Bac
 Saturday at 7.30pm, £11 - £12
 The Robin 2, Bilston, WV14 7LJ.
 Call 01902 401211

The Searchers
 Friday at 7.30pm, £18 - £23.50
 Stafford Gatehouse Theatre,
 ST16 2LT.
 Call 01785 254653

Chris Helme
 Saturday at 8pm, £7 - £14
 Lichfield Guildhall, WS13 6LU.
 Call 01543 262223

Pop Factor: The Concert!
 Sun at 2.30pm, £10.50 - £44
 Lichfield Garrick, WS13 6HR.
 Call 01543 412121

Axis Of
 Mon at 7pm, £6.60
 The Slade Rooms,
 Wolverhampton, WV1 1HP.
 Call 01902 552106

JAZZ & BLUES

The Blues Brothers Experience
 Friday at 7.30pm,
 £17.50 - £19.50
 Lichfield Garrick, WS13 6HR.
 Call 01543 412121

Jamboree
 Friday at 5pm, Free
 Symphony Hall, Birmingham,
 B1 2EA.
 Call 0121 780 3333

Gordon Campbell Big Band
 Sun at 3pm, £12.50 - £17.50
 Town Hall Birmingham, B3 3DQ.
 Call 0121 780 3333

Steve Tilston
 Friday at 7.45pm, £10.75
 Palace Theatre, Redditch,
 B98 8AE. Call 01527 65203

All or Nothing
 Friday at 8pm - 2am, £5
 Moochers, Stourbridge,
 DY8 1PH. Call 01384 671141

FOLK & ACOUSTIC

Live and Picking
 Friday at 8pm, £5
 Newhampton Arts Centre,
 Wolverhampton, WV1 4AN.
 Call 01902 572090

Danny Vaughn & Dan Reed - Acoustic
 Wed at 7pm, £16.50
 The Slade Rooms,
 Wolverhampton, WV1 1HP.
 Call 01902 552106

Irish Session
 Wed at 8pm, Free
 Katie Fitzgerald's, Wollaston,
 Stourbridge, DY8 3TB.
 Call 01384 374410

Brewood Acoustic Club
 Singers' Night
 Thu at 8pm, 8pm, £2 (£1 singers)
 Brewood Cricket Club, ST19 9HX.
 Call 01902 850422

Cara Dillon
 Friday at 7.30pm, £21
 Town Hall Birmingham, B3 3DQ.
 Call 0121 780 3333

Raymond Froggatt
 Sun at 7pm, £12.50 - £20
 The Slade Rooms,
 Wolverhampton, WV1 1HP.
 Call 01902 552106

Barluath
 Wed at 7.45pm, £11
 Red Lion Folk Club, Kings Heath,
 Birmingham, B14 7LY.
 Call 0121 472 4253

Hue and Cry - Stripped 2015
 Sun at 7.30pm, £19.50 - £20.50
 The Robin 2, Bilston, WV14 7LJ.
 Call 01902 401211

CLASSICAL & OTHER MUSIC

Gambia Schools Project Fundraising Gig
 Thu at 7.30pm, £3
 Katie Fitzgerald's, Wollaston,
 Stourbridge, DY8 3TB.
 Call 01384 374410

Glee Choirs Concert
 Tue at 7pm, £10
 Wolverhampton Grand Theatre,
 WV1 1DE. Call 01902 573320

Music in the Mansion
 Sun at 1.30pm, 3pm,
 Shugborough Estate, Stafford,
 ST17 0XB.
 Call 01889 881388

CSBO Brahms and Beethoven
 Saturday at 7pm, £12.50 - £44
 Symphony Hall, Birmingham,
 B1 2EA.
 Call 0121 780 3333

Bahms Requiem
 Saturday at 7.30pm, £12
 St John's Church,
 Wolverhampton, WV2 4BH.
 Call 01902 422642

A Hint of Spring
 Friday at 7.30pm, £5
 St Paul's Church Stafford,
 ST17 4LJ. Call 01785 258796

THEATRE

Chris and Pul Roadshow
 Wed at 11am, 2pm, £10 - £43
 Palace Theatre, Redditch,
 B98 8AE. Call 01527 65203

Mrs Brown's Boys
 Friday, Saturday at 7.30pm,
 £25.90 - £44.94
 Gentling Arena, Birmingham,
 B40 1NT.
 Call 0121 780 4141

Derren Brown
 Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu at 7.30pm,
 £39.90
 New Alexandra Theatre,
 Birmingham, B5 4DS.
 Call 0844 871 3011

Sing-a-Long-a Frozen
 Sun at 11.30am, 3pm,
 New Alexandra Theatre,
 Birmingham, B5 4DS.
 Call 0844 871 3011

Cirque Éloize: Cirkopolis
 Friday, Saturday at 7.30pm,
 Saturday at 2.30pm, £12 - £30
 Birmingham Hippodrome,
 B5 4TB. Call 0844 338 5000

Disney On Ice presents...
 Thu at 3pm, 7pm,
 £19.18 - £46.62
 Gentling Arena, Birmingham,
 B40 1NT. Call 0121 780 4141

Shrek the Musical
 Tue, Wed, Thu at 7.30pm,
 £18.50 - £45
 Birmingham Hippodrome,
 B5 4TB. Call 0844 338 5000

The Guvnors
 Friday at 7.30pm - 1am, £6
 The Arena Aldridge, Aldridge,
 Walsall, WS9 8QR.
 Call 01922 277 896

Rent
 Wed, Thu at 7.30pm, £10
 Wolverhampton Grammar
 School, WV3 9RB.
 Call 01902 421326

A View From The Bridge
 Friday, Saturday at 7.30pm,
 Saturday at 2.30pm,
 £12.50 - £23.50
 Wolverhampton Grand Theatre,
 WV1 1DE. Call 01902 573320

Sally Morgan
 Mon at 7.30pm, £23.50 - £28.90
 Lichfield Garrick Theatre,
 WS13 6HR. 01543 412121

The Business of Murder.
 Tue, Wed, Thu at 7.30pm,
 £11 - £25
 Lichfield Garrick Theatre and
 Studio, WS13 6HR.
 Call 01543 412121

Cirkopolis
 Friday, Saturday at 7.30pm,
 Saturday at 2.30pm, £12 - £30
 Birmingham Hippodrome,
 B5 4TB. Call 0844 338 5000

Arcadia
 Friday, Saturday at 7.30pm,
 Saturday at 2.30pm,
 £12.40 - £28.40
 New Alexandra Theatre,
 Birmingham, B5 4DS.
 Call 0844 871 3011

Alice - Crescent Youth Theatre
 Friday, Saturday at 7.15pm,
 Saturday at 2.15pm, £6 - £11
 The Crescent Theatre,
 Birmingham, B16 8AE.
 Call 0121 643 5858

Back Down
 Tue at 7pm, Wed at 1pm, 3pm,
 £5 - £12
 Newhampton Arts Centre,
 Wolverhampton, WV1 4AN.
 Call 01902 572090

All My Sons
 Saturday at 2pm, Friday,
 Saturday at 7.30pm,
 £13.50 - £35
 The Birmingham Rep, B1 2EP.
 Call 0121 236 4455

Collidoscope
 Mon at 8pm, £8 - £12
 The Birmingham Repertory
 Theatre, B1 2EP.
 Call 0121 236 4455

Penelope RETOLD
 Wed, Thu at 8pm, £9 - £12
 The Birmingham Repertory
 Theatre, B1 2EP.
 Call 0121 236 4455

The Accrington Pals by Peter Whelan
 Friday, Saturday at 7.30pm,
 £9 - £12
 Lichfield Garrick Theatre and
 Studio, WS13 6HR.
 Call 01543 412121

Shen Yun
 Saturday at 7.30pm, Sun at
 2.30pm, £50 - £100
 The ICC, Birmingham, B1 2EA.
 Call 0121 644 5025

Tab Operatic Society's
 Summer Holiday
 Friday, Saturday at 7.15pm,
 Saturday at 2pm, £11 - £14
 Brierley Hill Civic Hall,
 DY5 3DH.
 Call 01384 812730

The Day The Stories Went / Prom
 Saturday at 4pm, 7pm, £7
 The Birmingham Rep, B1 2EP.
 Call 0121 236 4455

More Light / Pies Tomorrow
 Mon, Tue at 7pm, £7
 The Birmingham Rep, B1 2EP.
 Call 0121 236 4455

Doreen - Women On Top
 Friday, Saturday at 7.30pm,
 £10 - £12.50
 The Rose Theatre,
 Kidderminster, DY10 2RX.
 Call 01562 743745

DANCE

Brendan Cole - A Night to Remember
 Sun at 7.30pm, £19.50 - £39.50
 Symphony Hall, Birmingham,
 B1 2EA.
 Call 0121 780 3333

Embraced Burlesque
 Saturday at 8pm, £10
 Newhampton Arts Centre,
 Wolverhampton, WV1 4AN.
 Call 01902 572090

OTHER EVENTS

The Quiz
 Tue at 7.30pm, Free
 Katie Fitzgerald's, Wollaston,
 Stourbridge, DY8 3TB.
 Call 01384 374410

Home Building & Renovating Show
 Friday, Saturday, Sun at 10am -
 5pm, £12 - £24
 National Exhibition Centre,
 Birmingham, B40 1NT.
 Call 0121 780 4141

Check out full listings in **the ticket** in Friday's Express & Star

Shrek — it ain't over til it's ogre



Dean Chisnall as Shrek and Carley Stenson as Princess Fiona in *Shrek The Musical*, coming to Birmingham

EVERYONE'S favourite green ogre is coming to Birmingham Hippodrome when *Shrek The Musical* starts a month-long run on Tuesday.

Based on the award-winning DreamWorks animated movie, the hit West End musical stars joins our unlikely hero and his loyal steed Donkey as they embark on a quest to rescue

the beautiful Princess Fiona from a fire breathing, love-sick dragon. Add the diminutive Lord Farquaad, a gang of feisty fairytale misfits, and a ginger biscuit with attitude, and you've got the biggest musical comedy around.

Featuring new songs as well as Shrek anthem *I'm a Believer*, the all-singing, all-dancing extravaganza

is bound to be a big success all over again in Brum.

Dean Chisnall will play our hefty hero with Faye Brookes as Princess Fiona and Idriss Kargbo as wise-cracking Donkey. Don't be left green with envy — grab a ticket.

It will also be at Wolverhampton Grand, September 30 to October 11.



Nicki's back with a bang

AMERICA'S Queen of Rap Nicki Minaj brings her Pinkprint European tour to Birmingham's Barclaycard Arena next Friday, April 3.

The diminutive dynamo of R&B will be joined by special guest Trey Songz, who recorded two chart-topping collaborations with Nicki, *Touchin/Loving* and *Bottoms Up*.

The Anaconda singer was recently back in the singles chart with her Bang Bang collaboration with Jessie J and Ariana Grande.

Expect some formidable fast rapping, expletives and a big serving of raunch as the glamorous hip-hop superstar brings a party vibe to the former NIA.

About the tour, Nicki commented: "It's been way too long since I've seen my European Barbz! I can't wait to get back and party with all of you with Trey Songz."

"We have more than a few surprises in store, and I promise this will be my biggest and best tour yet!"

For ticket availability check www.theticketfactory.com or call 0844 338 8000.

'I can't wait to get back and party'

All aboard for a comedy chiller

A PHANTOM loco is on its way to Wolverhampton with *The Ghost Train* making a scheduled stop at the city's Grand Theatre from April 7 to 11.

Theatre fans can get a one way ticket to thrills and chills at Arnold Ridley's classic comedy drama about a motley group of passengers stranded at a rural train station on a stormy night. The stationmaster tells the tale of the spectral train which promises death to anyone who sees it.

The production features Wall-born former Hi-de-Hi! actor Jeffrey Holland, who will also be performing his one-man play about Stan Laurel — And this is my friend Mr Laurel — at 2.30pm on April 9.

Dillon brings her show to Town Hall

THE Town Hall, Birmingham will be ringing to the silken tones of Irish songstress Cara Dillon on Friday.

Her show at the Victoria Square venue begins at 7.30pm. Tickets are £21 plus the usual transaction fee unless bought in person.

Then on March 28 *The Furrow Collective* will be at the MAC Birmingham from 8pm, tickets are £12 or £10 with concessions.

The collective of Emily Portman, Alasdair Roberts, Lucy Farrell and Rachel Newton, has been nominated in two categories in this year's BBC Radio 2 Folk Awards.

Blue is the Colours for comeback tour

R&B stars Blue return to Wolverhampton Civic Hall tonight (Thursday) flushed with the success of their comeback tour.

The group, consisting of Antony Costa, Duncan James, Lee Ryan and Simon Webbe, are more popular than ever.

Originally formed in 2000, Blue released three studio albums that peaked at number one in the UK alongside releasing 16 singles, over a four-year period until disbanding in 2004. The comeback has proved enormously successful and the band have a new album out, *Colours*. Meanwhile Simon has won lots of new fans after his appearances on *Strictly Come Dancing*.

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25th April	2 days	Llandundo Excursions Chester & Llangollen	£75
27th April	5 days	Eastbourne Landsdown Hotel, Brighton, Rye and Battle	£295
4th May	5 Days	Ilfracombe Osborne Hotel Excursions Lincoln, Coombe Martin, Bideford	£259
8th May	3 Days	Liverpool Adelphi Hotel Excursions Chester & Southport	£149
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The Roman Baths built around the hot springs associated with the goddess Sulis Minerva

Colonnades of warm yellow stone in Georgian Bath

Pulteney Bridge on the River Avon

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Beautiful Bath, a honey-coloured city that's full of history and charm

ELEGANT and ancient Bath has been a tourist attraction for two thousand years and remains **England's most attractive city.**

Whether you dash down the M5 or take a leisurely meander through the Cotswolds, beautiful Bath will be ample reward. From the West Midlands, it's the ideal place to visit for a grand day out or a satisfying weekend away.

The honey-coloured city grew up around the only hot springs in the UK, which the Romans called Aque Sulis, creating a combined spa and religious centre which attracted pilgrims from across the Empire.

The Roman Baths at the heart of the city offer a fascinating glimpse into the past. The Romans built a temple to the goddess of the spring, Sulis Minerva, and a bathing complex around the mysterious bubbling

By Leon Burakowski

pool, enhanced in later years by the Georgians and Victorians.

The spring itself and the steps of the temple can still be seen, as can pleas and curses that the Roman pilgrims scratched onto lead scraps and threw into the steaming pool to enlist the help of the goddess.

Gilded

Two of the most impressive exhibits are the gilded bronze head of Sulis Minerva, which was found in a drain, and the Gorgon-like male face that once stared out from the temple facade, hair flowing like he was underwater.

The audio tours narrated by Bill Bryson, Alice Roberts and Michael Rosen are highly informative and you will find friendly 'Romans' to tell you about their everyday life.

The water can be sampled in the grand surroundings of the Pump Room but, be warned, it is an acquired taste.

The Pump Room was the focus for Georgian high society when flamboyant dandy Beau Nash held court as the master of ceremonies. A later resident was Jane Austen, who references Bath in her novels and is celebrated at the Jane Austen Centre.

The Georgians left their mark in the 18th century with remarkable architecture, so impressive that it has earned city the accolade of being the only UNESCO World Heritage city in the UK.

Highlights include the magnificent Royal Crescent, which at no1 includes the recreation of a Georgian home, the Assembly Rooms which include the Fashion Museum, The Circus and Queen Square, all designed by father and son architects both named John Wood.

Other sights include the charming Pulteney Bridge, shops that span the River Avon beside the city's weir and rugby club, and Bath Abbey with its facade on which angels scale ladders to heaven.

If feeling footsore, the best way to see them all is via the Citysightseeing Bath hop on-hop off bus.

Bun

Once the sightseeing is done, Bath has a huge array of upmarket shops and eateries.

No visit is complete without buying a bun or two from Sally Lunn's shop. Similar to a French brioche but less sweet, these original Bath buns have been made in the city since the 1680s and are delicious lightly toasted with a topping of melted butter.

For more information see the www.visitbath.co.uk website.



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CHOICE



Sharon Osbourne

CSI: Crime Scene Investigation (Channel 5, 9.55pm)
Ex-con Jimmy Turelli is killed in a car accident and the investigators soon determine he had suffered previous trauma, with a trail of blood leading them to a shallow grave where he had been buried alive. Morgan discovers evidence that leads the CSIs to an exclusive club where Turelli worked before going to prison, and they find out he was involved in a new kind of pool game that is popular in Los Angeles. They speak to manager Elise Massey and learn there is more going on behind the scenes than meets the eye. Guest starring Sharon Osbourne, alongside Ted Danson, Elisabeth Shue, George Eads, Jorja Fox and Eric Szmanda.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast, **8.00 Live** Formula 1: Malaysian Grand Prix Qualifying. Suzi Perry presents coverage from the Sepang International Circuit (Start-time 9.00am), as the drivers battle for pole position in the second round of the campaign. **10.30 Saturday Kitchen Live**, **12.00 BBC News**, **Weather**, **12.10 Football Focus**, **12.50 Saturday Sportsday**, **1.00 Bargain Hunt**, **2.00 Formula 1: Malaysian Grand Prix Qualifying Replay**, **4.00 Film**: Over the Hedge. (2006) Animated comedy, with the voice of Bruce Willis. **5.20 Celebrity Mastermind**, **5.50 Pointless Celebrities**, **6.40 BBC News**, **6.50 Regional Programme**, **7.00 The Voice UK**. Emma Willis and Marvin Humes present the live semi-final of the singing competition, in which the remaining eight contestants take to the stage twice for a chance to make it through to the final – once on their own and once in a team performance with their coaches. **9.05 Casualty**. Zoe's day begins with a video call from old friend Maggie, inviting her to work for the air ambulance. However, it's soon down to business as two major accidents enter the ER, although things turn weird when the consultant begins to suffer recurrent bad dreams – and see her experiencing the same events more than once in a Groundhog Day-like episode, giving her the chance to make up for her mistakes during a difficult shift. Sunetra Sarker stars, with Jamie Davis, Derek Thompson and Suzanne Packer. **9.55 The National Lottery Live**. Gaby Roslin pushes the buttons to reveal the results of the Lotto and Thunderball draws. **10.05 BBC News**, **Weather**, **10.25 Film: Meet the Parents**. (2000) A male nurse makes a disastrous bid to impress his girlfriend's father – a former CIA agent who does not suffer fools gladly. Comedy, starring Robert De Niro and Ben Stiller. National Lottery Update. **12.05 Film: Rogue**. (2007) A party of tourists taking a boat trip in an uncharted part of the Australian Outback is attacked by a ferocious crocodile. Thriller, starring Radha Mitchell and Michael Varian. **2.40 (BST) Weather for the Week Ahead**, **2.45 BBC News**.

BBC2

7.05 Racing Legends: Stirling Moss. (R) **8.05 Film: The Last Flight of Noah's Ark**. (1980) **9.40 Deadly on a Mission**: Pole to Pole. **10.10 Deadly on a Mission**: Pole to Pole. **10.40 Fred Dibnah's Magnificent Monuments**, **11.10 The Nature of Britain**, **12.00 A Taste of Britain**, **12.30 Michel Roux's Service**, **1.30 Film: The Importance of Being Earnest**. (2002) **3.00 Growing Up Wild: Natural World**, **4.00 Athletics: World Cross Country Championships**, **5.05 Flog It!** **6.05 Gardeners' World**. Monty Don plants up a new bed of asparagus and shows how to lift and divide hostas, plus a report from South Africa explores how agapanthus can thrive in the wild. (R) **6.35 Kew on a Plate**. Summer has arrived at Kew and Raymond Blanc tries to protect his carrot crop to ensure he has a good supply for a stew, while Kate Humble learns how the vegetable was once used in medicine. At Hampton Court, food historian Marc Meltonville makes Kate a cup of hot chocolate as the Georgians would have prepared it, while Raymond prepares a vegetable bean chilli, complete with raw cacao. On the Isle of Wight, Kate discovers how a clandestine wartime operation was responsible for Britain's introduction to garlic. (R) **7.35 Dad's Army**. Mainwaring's men pose as traitors to see how the residents of Walmington-on-Sea would deal with genuine Nazi infiltrators in their midst. (R) **8.05 Pavlopetri - The City Beneath the Waves**. Archaeologists use submersible robots and computer simulations to investigate the world's oldest submerged city, which lies off the southern coast of the Greek mainland. (R) **9.05 Film: Looper**. (2012) Premiere. In the future, a crime syndicate uses time travel to dispose of people without trace, sending them back 30 years to be killed by hitmen. Sci-fi thriller, with Joseph Gordon-Levitt and Emily Blunt. **10.50 Film: Apocalypto**. (2006) A Mayan tribesman captured to be used as a human sacrifice escapes into the jungle in a bid to save his family. Mel Gibson's historical adventure, starring Rudy Youngblood. **2.00 (BST) This is BBC Two**, **5.55 Film: The Amazing Mr Blunden**, (1972)

ITV

6.00 CITV: Bottom Knockers Street, **6.10 Bottom Knockers Street**, **6.20 Bottom Knockers Street**, **6.35 Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures**, **6.45 Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures**, **7.00 Canimals**, **7.10 Sooby**, **7.25 Signed Stories: Share a Story**, **7.30 Scrambled! Scrambled!**, **7.35 Scrambled! Nerds & Monsters**, **7.50 Scrambled! Adventure Time**, **8.30 Scrambled! Horrid Henry**, **8.50 Scrambled! Hulk and the Agents of Smash**, **9.25 The Jeremy Kyle Show**, **10.20 The Jeremy Kyle Show**, **11.20 The Jeremy Kyle Show**, **12.25 ITV News: Weather**, **12.30 The Jeremy Kyle Show**, **1.35 Film: Murder, She Wrote**. The Last Free Man. (2001) Mystery, starring Angela Lansbury. **3.30 River Monsters**, **4.00 Off Their Rockers**, **4.30 Big Star's Little Star**, **5.30 Regional Programme**, **5.45 ITV News**, **6.00 You've Been Framed! Top 100 Talent**. Harry Hill narrates a countdown of 100 talent-themed clips sent in by viewers, featuring everything from karaoke calamities to stage falls and battle stunts gone wrong. (R) **7.00 Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway**. The mischievous duo take control of pop star Cheryl Fernandez-Versini in I'm a Celebrity Get Out of Me Earl, Ashley Roberts overseas another round of Ant v Dec, and sports presenter Clare Balding is this week's star guest announcer. The Supercomputer also hits the road again and there are plenty of audience surprises, with someone receiving the chance to play for the contents of a commercial break. **8.25 You've Been Framed! Top 100 Talent**. Hypnotised contestants take on four seemingly simple challenges, including a Bushbuck Trial with former I'm a Celebrity campers Joe Swash, Vincent Simone and Vicki Michelle. **9.25 The Jonathan Ross Show**. The host welcomes Keanu Reeves, who talks about his new hitman thriller John Wick, plus Catherine Tate, Russell Brand and Oli Murs, who performs live. **10.25 ITV News: Weather**, **10.45 Film: Nutty Professor II: The Klumps**. (2000) Comedy sequel, with Eddie Murphy. **12.40 Jackpot247**, **4.00 Film: (BST) Carry On! Don't Lose Your Head**, (1966) **5.30 ITV Nightscreen**.

CHANNEL 4

6.10 The Grid, **6.35 Cycling: Sarah Storey's Longest Hour**, **7.30 Film: Superbike World Championship**, **8.00 The Morning Line**, **9.00 Everybody Loves Raymond**, **9.30 Everybody Loves Raymond**, **10.00 Everybody Loves Raymond**, **11.00 Frasier**, **11.30 The Big Bang Theory**, **12.00 The Big Bang Theory**, **12.30 Marvel's Agents of SHIELD**, **1.30 Channel 4 Racing**, **4.05 Channel 4 Racing: Dubai World Cup**, Emma Spencer presents live coverage of the world's most lucrative flat meeting. **5.35 The Simpsons**, **6.05 The Simpsons**, **6.35 Channel 4 News**, **7.00 Stonehenge: Walking Through History**. Tony Robinson embarks on a walk across Wiltshire, from Avebury to Stonehenge, telling the story of the development that occurred in the latter days of the Neolithic era. (R) **8.00 The World's Wildest Weather**. Sunlight transforms water into liquid gold, a record-breaking heatwave wipes out thousands of bats, and little-understood gravity waves are captured on camera. Last in the series. **9.00 Coalition**. Feature-length political drama by acclaimed writer James Graham, charting the emotionally wrought and frenzied days in 2010 that led to Nick Clegg's rise from rank outsider to the man who would decide the fate of the country. As he took to the podium for the UK's first-ever televised leaders' debate, the Lib Dem leader (played by Bertie Carvel) had been an MP for just five years and was the new kid on the Westminster block. Living in the shadow of Gordon Brown (Ian Grieve) and David Cameron (Mark Dexter), his party was relegated to the sidelines. But as he finished his impassioned speech, something stirred the public's need for change, and threatened to shake the current political system to its core. **10.35 Film: Wanted**. (2008) A man joins a secret society of superpowered assassins that kills people destined to commit acts of evil. Action adventure, starring James McAvoy and Morgan Freeman. **12.45 Alan Carr: Chatty Man**, **2.35 Film: (BST) Rendition**, (2007) **4.30 Hollyoaks**, (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake!, **10.15 SpongeBob SquarePants**, **10.50 Film: The Borrowers**, (1997) **12.30 Film: Columbo: Strange Bedfellows**, (1995) Crime drama, starring Peter Falk and Rod Steiger. **2.25 Holiday Love Rats Exposed**, **3.25 Costa Del Casualty: Benidorm ER**, **4.25 GPs: Behind Closed Doors**, **5.25 The Nightmarer Neighbour Next Door**, **6.20 Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away**. Paul Bohill and Steve Pinner evict a couple who owe five months' rent on a flat in an affluent London suburb, and later hit a snag when they try to seize a taxi over a £3,000 debt. (R) **7.10 Police Interceptors**. Jim is on the trail of a speeding motorcyclist. Jon retrieves a stolen caravan and Sarah deals with the aftermath of a drunken brawl between two brothers. (R) **8.00 5 News Weekend**, **8.05 NCIS: Gibbs and DiNozzo** investigate the case of a retired marine colonel found murdered with an axe, and discover the evidence points to his drug-addicted son. (R) **9.00 NCIS**. The team investigates the murder of a marine working for the Defence Intelligence Agency who was blamed for the disappearance of 500 specialised rifles in Afghanistan. (R) **9.55 CSI: Crime Scene Investigation**. Ex-con Jimmy Turelli is killed in a car accident and the investigators soon determine he had suffered previous trauma, with a trail of blood leading them to a shallow grave where he had been buried alive. Morgan discovers evidence that leads the CSIs to an exclusive club where Turelli worked before going to prison, and they find out he was involved in a new kind of pool game that is popular in Los Angeles. They speak to manager Elise Massey and learn there is more going on behind the scenes than meets the eye. **10.55 Law & Order: Special Victims Unit**, (R) **11.50 True Crimes: The First 72 Hours**. Following cases from across Canada and America during the first three days after a crime is committed. (R) **12.15 SuperCasino**, **4.10 (BST) Costa Del Casualty: Benidorm ER**, **5.00 Aidan: The Farest Boy in the World**, **5.50 Access**.

DIGITAL

BBC Three
7.00 Doctor Who, **8.00 Top Gear**, **9.00 Russell Howard's Good News**, **10.00 Live at the Apollo**, **11.00 Family Guy**, **2.15 (BST) Killer Magic**, **2.45 Bluestone 42**, **3.15 Russell Howard's Good News**, **4.15 Live at the Apollo**, **4.35 In Deep**, **5.00 Close**
BBC Four
7.00 Lost Kingdoms of Central America, **8.00 Chemistry - A Volatile History**, **9.00 Inspector Montalbano**, **10.55 Frank Sinatra: The Magic of the Century - Arena Special**, **12.25 Top of the Pops: 1980**, **2.10 (BST) Great Guitar Riffs at the BBC**, **3.15 Lost Kingdoms of Central America**, **4.10 Sounds of the Sixties**, **4.40 Close**
ITV2
11.40 Catchphrase, **12.25 Film: Wild West**, (1999) **2.30 Film: Beethoven's 2nd**, (1993) **4.20 Mr Bean**, **5.25 Film: She's the Man**, (2006) **7.35 Film: The Mummy**, (1999) **10.00 Celebrity Juice**, **10.45 Ibiza Weekender**, **11.45 Crazy Beaches**, **12.45 Hell's Kitchen**, **2.30 (BST) Life's Funniest Moments**, **2.55 Teleshopping**, **5.55 ITV2 Nightscreen**
ITV3
11.00 The Darling Buds of May, **12.05 Wycliffe**, **1.50 A Touch of Frost**, **3.55 Wycliffe**, **5.00 Agatha Christie's Marple**, **7.00 Doc Martin**, **8.00 Foyles War**, **10.00 Inspector Morse**, **12.15 Wycliffe**, **2.15 (BST) ITV3 Nightscreen**, **2.30 Teleshopping**
ITV4
11.50 Minder, **12.55 Hornblower**, **3.00 Counting Cars**, **3.55 Pawn Stars**, **5.45 Storage Wars**, **6.10 Storage Wars: Texas**, **7.10 Shed and Buried**, **8.15 Film: Jackie Chan's First Strike**, (1996) **10.00 Film: Rumble in the Bronx**, (1995) **11.50 Film: Air America**, (1990) **3.00 (BST) Teleshopping**
E4
11.00 Taking New York, **12.00 New Girl**, **1.00 Melissa & Joey**, **2.00 Baby Daddy**, **3.00 Rules of Engagement**, **4.00 How I Met Your Mother**, **5.00 Troy**, **5.50 Rude(ish) Tube Shorts**, **6.00 The Big Bang Theory**, **9.00 Film: Easy A**, (2010) **10.55 The Big Bang Theory**, **11.55 Rude Tube: Uter Pranks**, **2.00 (BST) Troy**, **3.05 2 Broke Girls**, **3.30 The Cleveland Show**, **4.15 The Tomorrow People**
Film4
11.00 The Last Mimzy, (2007) **1.00 Spirited Away**, (2001) **3.25 Toral Toral Toral**, (1970) **6.25 The Parent Trap**, (1998) **9.00 Solomon Kane**, (2010) **11.05 The Reel**, (2010) **12.50 Festen**, (1998) **3.55 (BST) Close**

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CHOICE



Amanda Abbington

Mr Selfridge (ITV, 9pm)
Series three of the hit period drama about the eponymous American store owner, his staff and relations comes to an end this week. As you might imagine there's no shortage of drama. Aside from a boardroom confrontation between Harry (Jeremy Piven) and Loxley (Aidan McCauley), who berates his business methods and announces that the board are proposing a vote of no confidence in him as Chairman, Selfridge announces his engagement to Nancy (Kelly Adams). However, it becomes obvious to the future bride that the deceit may not carry on much longer as Princess Marie (Zoe Wanamaker) grows more curious about the Selfridge Estate project.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. 7.00 Live Formula 1: Malaysian Grand Prix. **10.30 Homes Under the Hammer. 11.00 Sunday Politics. 12.15 Bargain Hunt. (R) 1.00 BBC News: Weather. 1.15 Escape to the Country. (R) 2.00 Formula 1: Malaysian Grand Prix Replay. (R) 4.00 The Truth About Calories. (R) 5.00 Songs of Praise. 5.35 BBC News. 5.50 Regional Programme.**

6.00 The Big Painting Challenge. Una Stubbs and Richard Bacon travel to Dartmouth for the final of the art competition. The four amateurs set up their easels at the Royal Naval College and are asked to capture a sense of Britain's seafaring heritage – and with just three challenges left, one contestant takes a big risk to impress the judges. That's followed by a quick sketch of a platoon of naval cadets marching on the parade ground, before the final painting of the competition, in which they have to capture the atmosphere of Dartmouth harbour. It's then up to judges Daphne Todd and Lachlan Goudie to decide who will be the first Big Painting Challenge winner. Last in the series.

7.00 Countryfile. Matt Baker meets the Hampshire farmers who started with nothing more than a handbook and an empty field, and Charlotte Smith discovers the links between farming and fashion. Including Weather for the Week Ahead.

8.00 Antiques Roadshow. Fiona Bruce and the team return to Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral, where finds include an LS Lowry sketch, a 17th-century clock, a model of a local ship and a miniature piano.

9.00 Poldark. News of Ross and Demeiza's marriage shocks the locals, although Charles's reaction is the most unexpected of all. Verity sets about teaching the new bride the art of being a lady.

10.00 BBC News.

10.20 Regional Programme.

10.30 Have I Got a Bit More Old News for You. David Mitchell hosts an extended edition of the satirical quiz from May 2014. (R)

11.10 Film: Deja Vu. (2006)

1.05 Film: AWOL: Absent Without Leave. (1990) **2.50 Weather for the Week Ahead. 2.55 BBC News.**

BBC2

7.30 Gardeners' World. (R) 8.00 Countryfile. (R) 9.00 The Andrew Marr Show. 10.00 The Big Questions. 11.00 Saturday Kitchen Best Bites. 12.30 A Taste of Britain. 1.00 Back in Time for Dinner. (R) 2.00 Michel Roux's Service. (R) 3.00 Flog It! 4.00 Triathlon. 5.35 Operation Stonehenge: What Lies Beneath. (R)

6.35 Pompidou. Hove thinks his employer has hoarded too much junk and tries to shift some of the clutter at a church hall fete, but Pompidou will do anything it takes to ensure he keeps it all.

7.00 The Sea King: Britain's Flying Past. John Sergeant examines the history of the Sea King helicopter, which has been in service since 1969 and piloted by Prince Andrew during the Falklands conflict and more recently by Prince William. John meets people whose lives have been changed by the aircraft's search-and-rescue capacity and salutes its service to the nation. (R)

8.00 Caribbean with Simon Reeve. Simon meets the owner of a traditional wooden house in Barbados who has turned down millions of dollars from luxury property developers, then encounters marijuana growers on the volcanic island of St Vincent hoping that the drug will soon be decriminalised. On the South American mainland, Simon examines the mismanagement of Venezuela's natural resources, before crossing into Colombia, where he spends time with the Kogi – an indigenous people who have maintained their traditional forest lifestyle.

9.00 Louis Theroux: By Reason of Insanity. Part two of two. The journalist meets patients whose personalities and mental illnesses are so intertwined it makes treatment more difficult, and examines how insanity is defined.

10.00 Bluestone 42. New recruit Captain Ellen Best arrives on base and her presence soon affects the team in different ways, while Towerblock is desperate to prove he is fitter than Rocket.

10.30 Film: Dream House. (2011) Premiere. Horror, starring Daniel Craig and Rachel Weisz.

11.55 Film: The Mission. (1986)

1.55 Sign Zone: Countryfile. (R) 2.50 Hobby City. (R) 3.45 This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Bottom Knockers Street. 6.10 Bottom Knockers Street. (R) 6.20 Bottom Knockers Street. (R) 6.35 Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) 7.00 Animals. (R) 7.10 Sooty. (R) 7.25 Signed Stories: Share a Story. (R) 7.30 Scrambled!: Scrambled! 7.35 Scrambled!: Nerds & Monsters. (R) 7.50 Scrambled!: The Aquabats! Super Show! (R) 8.30 Scrambled!: Horrid Henry. 8.50 Scrambled!: Hulk and the Agents of Smash. 9.25 The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) 12.40 ITV News: Weather. 12.50 Murder, She Wrote. (R) 1.50 All Star Family Fortunes. (R) 2.40 Live International Football. Brazil v Chile (Kick-off 3.00pm). 5.15 Catchphrase. (R)

6.05 Regional Programme: Weather. 6.15 ITV News: Weather.

6.30 The Chase: Celebrity Special. Meera Syal (The Kumars), fashion designer David Emanuel, former England rugby player Kyran Bracken and comedian Johnny Vegas compete to win thousands of pounds for charity by pitting their general knowledge against one of the show's resident trivia experts. However, they must work as a team to build their prize pot and stay one step ahead of the Chaser, Bradley Walsh hosts. (R)

7.30 Off Their Rockers. The hidden-camera show continues, as Barry receives a few hygiene tips, Dave performs an unusual act of kindness and Seb flexes his muscles for a game of arm-wrestling.

8.00 Coronation Street. Hour-long episode. Steve worries that Michelle does not really want to marry him. Meanwhile, Bethany is determined to miss her flight, so she throws away Nick's car keys.

9.00 Mr Selfridge. Harry locks horns with Loxley in the boardroom, Princess Marie grows more suspicious about the Selfridge Estate project and Gordon faces a romantic decision. Last in the series.

10.00 ITV News: Weather.

10.15 Cricket World Cup Highlights. Action from the final at Melbourne Cricket Ground in Australia.

11.15 Premiership Rugby Union. 12.15 The Store. 2.30 The Jeremy Kyle Show USA. (R) 3.10 ITV Nightscreen. 5.05 The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R)

CHANNEL 4

6.35 How I Met Your Mother. 6.55 How I Met Your Mother. 7.15 How I Met Your Mother. 7.40 Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) 8.05 Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) 8.30 Frasier. (R) 9.00 Frasier. (R) 9.30 Sunday Brunch. 12.30 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces. (R) 1.30 The Big Bang Theory. (R) 1.55 The Big Bang Theory. (R) 2.20 The Simpsons. (R) 2.50 Film: Leap Year. (2010) Romantic comedy, starring Amy Adams and Matthew Goode. 4.50 Place in the Sun: Home or Away. (R) 5.50 Channel 4 News.

6.00 Film: Johnny English Reborn. (2011) A bumbling secret agent retires to a Tibetan monastery in disgrace after a mission goes wrong. He is lured out of seclusion by the chance to redeem himself when his former bosses seek his help in foiling an attempt to assassinate the premier of China. Spy comedy sequel, starring Rowan Atkinson, Gillian Anderson, Rosamund Pike and Dominic West.

8.00 Great Canal Journeys. Built nearly a century before the British canal system, the Canal du Midi in the south of France has been designated a world heritage site. Timothy West and Prunella Scales explore a picturesque stretch, as it meanders toward the Mediterranean. They visit the town of Beziers and the Malpas Tunnel – Europe's first navigable canal tunnel – and taste the delights of lamb's brain fritters, as well as brandy that is almost 200 years old.

9.00 Indian Summers. Simla is buzzing amid preparations for its annual amateur-dramatics performance, but the production of The Importance of Being Earnest is overshadowed by the news of a murder victim's body found in the river. Ian inadvertently points the finger of blame at a close friend, while Ralph faces increasing pressure when Gandhi declares a hunger strike. Asif is shocked when Sergeant Singh confronts him about the missing evidence.

10.00 Gogglebox. Capturing the households' instant reactions to what they are watching on TV. (R)

11.05 Film: End of Days. (R) 1.15 SuperCasino. 1.20 Film: The French Connection. (1971) 3.05 Come Dine with Me. (R) 5.25 Hugh's 3 Good Things: Best Bites. (R) 5.35 The Common Denominator. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake!: Peppa Pig. 6.05 Bananas in Pyjamas. (R) 6.20 Angelina Ballerina. (R) 6.30 Milkshake! Bop Box. (R) 6.35 Pip Ahoy! (R) 6.45 The Mr Men Show. (R) 7.00 Chloe's Closet. (R) 7.10 Bert and Ernie's Great Adventures. (R) 7.15 Oily the Little White Van. 7.20 Make Way for Noddy. (R) 7.35 Paw Patrol. (R) 7.45 Little Princess. (R) 8.00 Wanda and the Alien. (R) 8.10 Zack and Quack. 8.30 Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) 8.45 Jelly Jamm. (R) 9.00 LazyTown. 9.30 Dora and Friends. (R) 10.00 Milkshake! Show Songs. (R) 10.05 Mr Men. (R) 10.15 SpongeBob SquarePants. 10.50 The Hotel Inspector. (R) 11.50 Film: Cop and a Half. (1993) 1.35 Film: Around the World in 80 Days. (2004) Comedy adventure, starring Steve Coogan and Jackie Chan. 3.50 Film: Big Mommas: Like Father, Like Son. (2011) Comedy, with Martin Lawrence. 5.55 Film: Happy Feet. (2006) Animated adventure.

7.55 5 News Weekend.

8.00 World's Scariest Animal Attacks. Terrifying encounters caught on camera by ordinary people. A diver narrates his own shocking footage of a great white shark breaking open his cage with its jaws. A giant anaconda sinks its teeth into a Brazilian policeman, an agitated elephant charges a honeymooning British couple on an African safari and a lion turns on its handler at an awards ceremony. Plus, chimpanzees on the loose in Northern Ireland and a frightening incident at a bullring. (R)

9.00 Film: Hansel & Gretel: Witch Hunters. (2013) Premiere. The fairytale brother and sister grow up to be renowned witch hunters, using advanced weaponry to battle the supernatural. Their latest case leads to an encounter with a powerful sorceress stealing children for an arcane ritual and a discovery about their own past. Fantasy adventure, with Gemma Arterton and Jeremy Renner.

10.50 Film: Step Brothers. (2008) Two 40-year-old men who have never left the family home are forced to share a room when their single parents marry each other. Comedy, starring Will Ferrell.

12.45 Jackass. (R) 1.15 SuperCasino. 3.10 Breaking the Law: Bent Coppers. (R) 4.00 House Doctor. (R) 4.25 Make It Big. (R) 5.15 Angels of Jarm. (R) 5.40 Roary the Racing Car. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Three
7.00 Formula 1 **7.55** The Voice UK **10.00** I Survived a Zombie Apocalypse **11.00** Family Guy **11.45** Killer Magic **12.15** American Dad! **12.40** Family Guy **1.00** I Survived a Zombie Apocalypse **2.00** Bluestone 42 **2.30** World's Toughest Jobs **3.30** Killer Magic **4.00** Close

BBC Four
7.00 Mechanical Marvels **8.00** Twin Sisters: A World Apart **9.00** Lost Cities of the Ancients **10.05** Stonehenge: Timewatch **11.00** Film: Milk (2008) **1.00** Queens of Soul **2.00** Songs Motown **3.00** Northern Soul: Living for the Weekend **ITV2**
11.00 Take Me Out **12.15** You've Been Framed! **12.45** Catchphrase Celebrity Special **1.45** The Hot Desk: Ed Sheeran **1.55** Scorpion **2.50** Film: Hotel Transylvania (2012) **4.35** Kids Do the Funniest Things **5.35** Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway **7.00** Film: Evan Almighty (2007) **9.00** Ibiza Weekender **10.00** Film: Scary Movie 4 (2006) **11.45** Film: Friends with Kids (2011) **1.45** Morn **ITV3**
11.35 A Touch of Frost **1.30** Wycliffe **2.45** Film: Finding Neverland (2004) **4.50** Agatha Christie's Marple **6.50** Inspector Morse **9.00** Sunday Night at the Palladium **10.00** Birds of a Feather **11.00** Lewis **1.00** The Great Train Robbery **1.50** Wycliffe **2.45** Judge Judy **3.05** ITV3 Nightscreen **3.40** Emmerdale **ITV4**
12.25 Film: Death of a Gunfighter (1969) **2.30** Film: The Hanging Tree (1959) **4.40** Live International Football. **7.00** Shed and Buried **8.00** Premiership Rugby Union **9.00** The Chase **10.00** Storage Wars **10.30** Euro 2016 Qualifier Highlights **12.00** Film: Backdraft (1991) **2.30** Highway Patrol **2.55** ITV4 Nightscreen **3.00** Teleshopping **E4**
12.30 Revenge **1.30** The 100 **2.30** How I Met Your Mother **3.30** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **4.00** Film: Addams Family Values (1993) **6.00** The Big Bang Theory **9.00** Troy **10.00** Rude Tube: Utter Pranks **11.05** Bodyshockers **12.10** Taking New York **1.15** Rules of Engagement **2.10** Don't Trust the B**** in Apartment 23 **2.55** How I Met Your Mother **Film4**
11.00 A Ticket to Tomahawk (1950) **1.00** Arriety (2010) **2.55** Flight of the Phoenix (2004) **5.05** Cocoon (1985) **7.20** Beastly (2011) **9.00** Contraband (2012) **11.10** What's Love Got to Do with It (1993) **1.30** The Devil's Tomb (2009) **3.30** Close

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FILM CHOICES

MONDAY
Daybreakers, Channel 5, 11pm
In the near future, vampires have taken over the world, with the few remaining humans farmed as a food source. Thriller, starring Ethan Hawke. (2010)

TUESDAY
When a Man Loves a Woman, BBC1, 11.45pm
A couple's outwardly idyllic marriage is close to disintegrating through the wife's alcoholism, prompting her husband to resort to desperate measures to make her give up drinking for their children's sake. However, he is also forced to face up to the part he played in allowing her life to go off the rails. Drama, with Andy Garcia, Meg Ryan and Mae Whitman. (1994)

WEDNESDAY
No Strings Attached, BBC1, 11.15pm
Two childhood friends run into each other and end up sleeping together. Neither of them is interested in committing to a relationship, so they agree to keep things purely sexual. But despite their best efforts, they start to fall in love. Romantic comedy, starring Natalie Portman and Ashton Kutcher. (2011)



THURSDAY
The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn – Part 2, Channel 4, 9pm
Vampire couple Edward and Bella enjoy a happy married life with their new daughter, but the leaders of the undead race believe the child is a threat to their entire species. The protective parents gather their allies to defend the girl in a final battle with their enemies. Conclusion of the romantic fantasy series, with Kristen Stewart and Robert Pattinson. (2012)

FRIDAY
Valkyrie, Channel 5, 10.55pm
Fact-based thriller, recreating the 1944 plot to assassinate Adolf Hitler using a briefcase bomb. As the tide of the Second World War turns in favour of the Allies, a group of senior German officers recruits war hero Colonel Claus von Stauffenberg to spearhead an attempt on the Fuehrer's life. Starring Tom Cruise, Kenneth Branagh, Bill Nighy and Tom Wilkinson. (2008)

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Make a note to tune in to this musical feast

It's time to make your mind up – will you be watching this programme or not?

The Eurovision Song Contest is, of course, a competition that divides viewers – people tend to either love or hate it, while the songs are very rarely classics, Abba's Waterloo and, at a push, Sandie Shaw's Puppet on a String being the exceptions to that rule.

Sadly, the tunes have a tendency to be rather forgettable – can you remember the 'classics' titled Pump-Pump, Bern-Born, Tom Tom Tom, Boom Boom, Sing Sang Song? And, of course, Yamma-Yamma? No, thought not – unless you happen to be the writer of the Eurovision Encyclopaedia...

And, in case you were wondering, all those strange phrases really were bona fide entries in past years – and all have two further things in common: 1) They didn't win and 2) they were complete nonsense.

However, ridiculous lyrics and an insipid melody don't necessarily ensure you'll come a cropper. In some cases – most notably the Netherlands' 1975 effort Ding-Dinger-Dong – they mean the contest is in the bag, and you'll walk off with the trophy.

Norway did, of course, do rather well in 2009 as well, with Alexander Rybak winning with his song Fairytale, which gained a record-breaking 387 points.

Who will win when the contest takes place in Austria this year is anybody's guess, but it should be a real humdinger of a show, and not just because Australia has been allowed to join the fun - Eurovision is celebrating its 60th anniversary in 2015, so we can expect all sorts of shenanigans on the night.

Before that, the Hammersmith Apollo hosts this shindig, presented by Graham Norton and Sweden's Petra Mede. It features performances from the great and good of Eurovision's past, including reigning champion Conchita Wurst, Austria's first victor since 1966.

Others on the bill include Finland's hard-rockers Lordi, Israel's Dana International, our own Brotherhood of Man and, of course, Johnny Logan, the only person to have won three times, who performs a medley of his hits.

But it's actually rather more interesting to note who won't be there – Abba are the biggest act ever to have won Eurovision, but they won't be there. Let's face it, if they had regrouped for this one-off event, it would have stunned everybody and made headlines across the globe.

Some notable British stars also won't be in attendance, including Cliff Richard, Lulu, Katrina and the Waves and, perhaps most surprisingly of all, Bucks Fizz.

Fans have been up in arms on Twitter about the absence of Cheryl Baker, Mike Nolan and Jay Aston, who are still performing together under the name Formerly of Bucks Fizz. Perhaps it was legally just too difficult to get them back on stage with Bobby G, who still uses the band's original name.

So, it's a shame we won't see their Velcro-ripping skirt antics once more, but there should still be enough on view to keep the most ardent of Eurovision fans happy.



Graham Norton presents Eurovision's Greatest Hits, Friday, BBC1, 9pm

BEST OF THE REST

MONDAY
Only Connect, BBC2, 8.30pm
At times this is a rather smug, self-satisfied show aiming at the highest possible denominator. But given the amount of lowbrow series insulting the intelligence of so many out there, it's often a pleasure to tune in and get at least a few questions right. After six years on BBC Four, its perfect home, BBC Two bosses decided it was time the masses got a heavy dose of Victoria Coren Mitchell's dry wit, while contestants wracked their brains for answers and connections. But who will emerge victorious from this, the final episode of the current series? That remains to be seen, but we can tell you that one set of clues consists of Diarmuid Ua Duidbhne, White Death, Robin Hood and King Charles II.

The Ark, BBC1, 8.30pm
David Threlfall stars in this re-telling of the biblical story of Noah and the Ark. A farmer and boat-builder is visited by an angel who tells him of God's intention to send a great flood, and how he and his family will be saved from the deluge if he builds a large ark in the middle of the desert. What seems like a near-impossible task is made all the more difficult when his sons refuse to help, and as Noah

continues his quest alone, he faces ridicule from both his family and the townsfolk. Joanne Whalley, Don Warrington, Ashley Walters and Nico Mirallegro co-star.

TUESDAY
Live International Football, ITV, 7.30pm
Italy v England (Kick-off 7.45pm). Coverage of the friendly match from Juventus Stadium in Turin, where the sides face each other for the first time since the World Cup, when the Italians claimed a 2-1 victory at Arena Amazonia in Manaus, Brazil. While England did pose a strong attacking threat on that occasion they were largely profligate in front of goal, and the superior quality of Andrea Pirlo in the Azzurri midfield was the catalyst for their triumph.

WEDNESDAY
24 Hours in A&E, Channel 4, 9pm
The last episode in the current of run of this award-winning documentary focuses on patients and families who try to look to the future, instead of dwelling on the past. Cameras follow the story of 62-year-old Cora, who arrives by

air ambulance following a collision in which she was trapped in her car for over an hour. She is sent for a CT scan, with doctors suspecting she has multiple injuries, as husband Rae, who was driving the car, arrives by ambulance, and staff are concerned he could have sustained serious head, neck and internal injuries. Meanwhile, 23-year-old Scott has badly cut his knee while on a night out with friends, and he talks of being diagnosed with schizophrenia as a teenager.

THURSDAY
The ITV Leaders' Debate, ITV, 8pm
ITV News anchor Julie Etchingham presents a live two-hour debate between party leaders ahead of the General Election next month. The participants each answer questions asked directly by members of the studio audience, before the floor is opened up to a period of free-flowing debate. The programme gives

viewers the opportunity to see these high-profile politicians engaging in a discussion on significant issues ahead of what is on course to be the most tightly contested election in recent memory.

FRIDAY
Secrets of Great British Castles, Channel 5, 8pm
New series. Historian Dan Jones explores the turbulent past of six of Britain's most famous strongholds, beginning by heading to the south-east of England to visit Dover Castle. He reveals that Henry II ordered its construction not only as a statement of royal power, but also out of guilt for the murder of Thomas Becket, the Archbishop of Canterbury, in 1170. Dan discovers how a vast network of tunnels was used to defend the castle, including underground barracks built during the Napoleonic Wars and a nuclear bunker created during the Cold War.

Bear Grylls: Mission Survive, ITV, 9pm
The three remaining celebrities fight it out to be crowned Bear's Mission Survivor. The first task sees the group split for the first time, as the contenders abseil down a 300ft waterfall one by one. They then have to build a camp without their usual supplies, before tucking into the evening's dinner – rats.

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Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.

18	21	18	24			5			5	25	13	11
	25			14	17	24	15	5		L		10
9	10	16	2	24		3		12	18	16	17	5
	20			17		16					4	
	24	26	22	13	4	13	6	15		6	14	18
10				2		6			24			17
22	18	1	1	24	17		5	13	24	17	17	10
17		17				4		14			25	
18	14	24		22	17	16	22	13	10	4	24	
6		5		17		17		18			19	
23	10	12	18	18		21	22	12	24	24	7	
9		24		8	18	18	20	23			22	
5	23	6	22			4			9	23	4	12

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
R	W	H	I	E	D	V	G	K	P	T	X	Y
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
M	O	C	Q	F	N	A	B	U	Z	L	J	S

1	14
2	15
3	16
4	17
5	18
6	19
7	20
8	21
9	22
10	23
11	24
12	25
13	26

Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

Cryptic Clues:

Across

- 1 & 12Ac.** He's expected to make certain admissions (4-6)
- Geometrical term that shows a smart point of view? (5,5)
- Man on board is a bad creditor (8)
- Step around a harmful thing (4)
- See 1 Across.
- It's checked for Sailor Brown! (6)
- Friend has one spot for splendid residence (6)
- Happen to be change of diet (6)
- Part of the test yesterday giving the pupil discomfort? (4)
- Bravo! It's beautifully cooked (4,4)
- Make no profit from taking part in track events! (3,2,1,4)
- Successful shows in March, it seems (4)

Down

- See 13 Down
- See 11 Down
- One who bets on a footballer (6)
- 5 & 17Dn.** No system for making one's options open! (6,6)
- To provide encouragement in alcohol! (8)
- Put one's hand on smooth material (4)
- 11 & 3Dn.** Relaxing in a private capacity, maybe (8,2,4)
- 13 & 2Dn.** Wasn't content with a passive role (6,2,6,4)
- Strike after new arrangement, as those who provide all-round cover do (6)
- See 5 Down
- Pigeon-hole letters from Paris or Turin (4)
- Verve appearing in the well-bred (4)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		8				
9					10	11
12		13		14		
15			16	17		
18			19		20	
21					22	

Quick Clues:

Across

- Deficit (4)
- Put into place (10)
- Good-looking (8)
- Identical (4)
- Go back (6)
- Yearning (6)
- Blow (6)
- Intelligent (6)
- Dejected (4)
- Loneliness (8)
- Mournful (10)
- Indication (4)

Down

- Decorative (10)
- Hurried (4)
- Guide (6)
- Road (6)
- Plot (8)
- Inactive (4)
- Deceptive (10)
- Huge (8)
- Make certain (6)
- Inexperienced (6)
- Wealth (4)
- Fling (4)

Sudoku

		9	6		1		7
5	7			1		2	
			4	7		6	
	6			3			1
		4	9		6	3	
8			2				9
	2	5					
	5			4		9	3
4	3			9	6		

Fill in the grid below so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS >

7	9	6	3	5	4	2	8	1
1	3	2	7	9	8	6	4	5
4	5	8	1	2	6	7	9	3
6	4	3	8	1	5	9	2	7
5	7	1	2	6	9	4	3	8
2	8	9	4	7	3	1	5	6
3	1	5	9	4	7	8	6	2
8	2	4	6	5	1	5	7	9
9	6	7	5	8	2	3	1	4

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS: CRYPTIC - Across: 7 Router; 8 Tangles; 9 Afloat; 10 Lagos; 12 High street; 15 Treble clef; 18 Louis; 19 Optical; 21 Anemone; 22 Plumb. Down: 1 Ornamental; 2 Ruffs; 3 Nero; 4 Stitch; 5 Undothe; 6 Flaggled; 11 Set of clubs; 13 Illusion; 14 Refuses; 16 Crowded; 17 Scout; 20 Type. QUICK - Across: 7 Canon; 8 Torrent; 9 October; 10 Sweet; 12 Asseverate; 15 Accentuate; 18 Tress; 19 Kindred; 21 Unclean; 22 Adieu. Down: 1 Accountant; 2 Unite; 3 Knob; 4 Starve; 5 Prospect; 6 General; 11 Tremendous; 13 Sinister; 14 Screech; 16 Unkind; 17 Train; 20 Neat.

Quiz

- Which branch of learning is named from the Greek for 'love of wisdom'?
- What does the acronym CAMRA stand for?
- On which river is the Texan capital Austin?
- The Egyptian god Anubis had which animal's head?
- Who wrote Black Beauty in 1877?
- What is Germany's major airline?
- In which country did the Romans build the Antonine Wall?
- Who succeeded Oliver Cromwell as Lord Protector of the Commonwealth?
- The study of what includes scrutiny of arches, whorls and loops?
- Of which metal is malachite an ore?

Last week's solutions:

Quiz: 1 Alexander Fleming; 2 Scotland; 3 Mad Dog; 4 Patricia Highsmith; 5 Buzzard; 6 Ghana; 7 Alberto Tomba; 8 Graham Greene; 9 River Medway; 10 Gustav Mahler.
Niner: LIFEBOATS

Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

8289 gives a flower,
75265 gives a plant,
4813 gives trees.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

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There is utility area, WC plus large store. The first floor has three bedrooms, master with fitted furniture. The bathroom has bath with a shower over.

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BIRMINGHAM, Orion Building£800 pcm+Fees
A fantastic opportunity to rent a fully furnished apartment in the heart of Birmingham City Centre. This 1 bed modern property overlooking the Mailbox features open plan living with 24 hour concierge service and secure underground parking (permit required), double glazed and electric heating. Viewings highly recommended. EPC: TBC



KIDDERMINSTER, Grosvenor Avenue£795 pcm+Fees
Stunning 3 storey town house in a quiet cul-de-sac position within walking distance of Kidderminster train station. Completely refurbished to a very high standard. Front reception room, lounge with feature fireplace with wood-burner, modern fitted kitchen with appliances, 3 large double bedrooms, beautiful bathroom with separate shower cubicle and a roll edged clawed foot free standing bath. Not to be missed. EPC: E



HALESOWEN, Downing Street£695 pcm+Fees
An immaculately presented and recently modernized semi-detached home, centrally located to Halesowen Town Centre, comprising of: 3 good size bedrooms with fitted wardrobes, fitted kitchen with white goods, stunning lounge and separate dining room, family bathroom with shower, downstairs WC, gas central heating, double glazed, driveway parking, large rear garden, part furnished. A MUST SEE PROPERTY. EPC: E



HALESOWEN, Beecher Street£675 pcm+Fees
A deceptively large unfurnished bungalow which has just been refurbished. Ideal for buses to Halesowen, Stourbridge and Birmingham and in the catchment area for Colley Lane Primary School. Featuring a large lounge, modern fitted kitchen, new bathroom with shower. Benefits include central heating, double glazing, on road parking. Available now. EPC: D



HALESOWEN, Sunbury Road£650 pcm+Fees
Set in a quiet cul-de-sac and in the catchment area for Windsor High School. Featuring 3 bedrooms, 1 large lounge, dining area, modern kitchen, downstairs bathroom with shower, low maintenance rear garden, driveway parking. EPC: TBC



STOURBRIDGE, Stourbridge Road£625 pcm+Fees
An unfurnished 3 bedroom mid terraced property with off road parking to the rear, close to local amenities and main bus routes. The property is well presented and comprises of: entrance porch, hallway, lounge with feature fireplace, modern kitchen with appliances, 3 good size bedrooms, modern bathroom with shower, private rear garden. Available Now. EPC: D



HALESOWEN, Nimmings Road£625 pcm+Fees
Large end terraced property close to Blackheath Town Centre & Rowley Regis Train Station. Lounge, fitted kitchen/dining area, 3 large bedrooms, bathroom with shower, central heating, double glazing, front & rear gardens with garage to rear of property and driveway parking for up to 3 cars. EPC: D



HALESOWEN, Fatherless Barn Crescent£550 pcm+Fees
An unfurnished 3 bedroom semi detached family home within the catchment area for Colley Lane Primary School and the number 9 bus. Featuring an entrance hall, lounge, dining room, kitchen & utility, 3 good size bedrooms & upstairs walk in shower room. Large rear garden & driveway. Available Now. EPC: C



HALESOWEN, Princess Crescent£550 pcm+Fees
A very well presented 1st floor flat available in this popular and convenient location, briefly comprising of: a modern kitchen with integrated dishwasher, good size lounge, 2 good size bedrooms, beautiful newly fitted bathroom with 'P' shape bath with shower, integral garage & parking for 2 vehicles. EPC: D



HALESOWEN, Malt Mill Lane£535 pcm+Fees
An unfurnished mid terraced house, within walking distance to Blackheath Town Centre and not far from Rowley Regis train station, briefly comprising of: 2 reception rooms, fitted kitchen, downstairs shower room, 2 double bedrooms. Benefits include rear garden, off road parking. EPC: D



CRADLEY HEATH, Meadow Walk£525 pcm+Fees
Modern semi detached house within a popular residential area featuring gas central heating, spacious living room, modern fitted kitchen, downstairs house bathroom, 3 good size bedrooms, large rear garden, driveway parking for 2 cars. Available immediately EPC: E



HALESOWEN, Wotton Bank£525 pcm+Fees
A well presented 2 bedroom 2nd floor apartment in a very sought after location. Having secure intercom entry, entrance hall, 2 double bedrooms, bathroom with shower, large lounge, kitchen, garage on block and communal gardens. Available immediately. EPC: C



CRADLEY HEATH, Luanne Close£500 pcm+Fees
Wonderfully presented and with its own balcony. A 1st floor modern apartment, ideally located for Old Hill train station and local shops. Featuring 1 double bedroom and 1 single bedroom, modern kitchen with washer/dryer, lovely lounge with access to your own private balcony, house bathroom with shower, allocated parking. EPC: B



DUDLEY, Lantern Road £495 pcm+Fees
A beautifully presented mid terraced home close to local amenities. Featuring 2 bedrooms, modern fitted kitchen, spacious lounge, double glazing, gas central heating, rear garden and patio area, allocated parking. EPC: D



HALESOWEN, Ladysmith Road£495 pcm+Fees
A mid terraced house in a sought after area for Colley Lane Primary School, bus links to Halesowen and Stourbridge. This house features 2 reception rooms, fitted kitchen with oven/hob, dining area, new downstairs shower room, 2 good size bedrooms, double glazing, gas central heating, rear garden. EPC: TBC



KIDDERMINSTER, Keats Place£485 pcm+Fees
A well presented 2 bedroom ground floor flat, having accommodation including: hall, lounge, refitted kitchen with appliances, 2 bedrooms, bathroom, gas central heating, double glazing and cul de sac location. Virgin Broadband connection is available. Own entrance to the property. EPC: C



HALESOWEN, Belgrave Road£425 pcm+Fees
A large ground floor modern apartment within walking distance to Blackheath Town Centre and local buses. Featuring a spacious lounge, fitted kitchen with oven/hob, 1 double bedroom, newly fitted bathroom suite with shower. Gas central heating, small rear garden with private entrance. Available Now. EPC: TBC



OLDBURY, Causeway Green Road£425 pcm+Fees
This large, split level flat above shops, within walking distance to bus links and close to J2 of the M5, briefly comprising of: gas central heating, spacious living room, fitted kitchen, 2 double bedrooms, bathroom with shower, parking to rear. unfurnished. EPC: E



CRADLEY HEATH, Archer Gardens£425 pcm+Fees
Set within a quiet complex, close to Cradley Heath Town Centre and the local train station, is this unfurnished ground floor maisonette, benefiting from gas central heating (Bathroom), electric heating in the lounge and bedrooms, large living room with separate dining area, fitted kitchen, 2 bedrooms, bathroom with shower, communal gardens and allocated parking. EPC: C



LYE, High Street £375 pcm+Fees
Fully refurbished in the centre of Lye. This spacious 2nd floor apartment features a lovely lounge, 1 double bedroom, bathroom, modern and contemporary kitchen/ diner, electric heating, double glazing, on road parking. Available now. EPC: E

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- Two Bedrooms Shower Room W/c
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- Semi Detached Property EPC Rating D
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- Garage Driveway Rear Garden

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**QUINTON | £86,000**

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New-look Corsa looks on course to be a winner

By James Parker

The fourth-generation Vauxhall Corsa delivers similar dimensions to the old car – but that's as far as the similarities go. With a fresh chassis and suspension and a three-cylinder petrol engine that takes star billing, it also gets a classier interior. Keep your eye on this one. It could give the Ford Fiesta a real tough time.

How we used to chuckle at the Vauxhall Corsa, the totem of the clueless supermini driver. That was until 2006 when the Corsa suddenly and unexpectedly became one of the best cars in its class. It drove well, it felt solid and it even looked pretty perky.

The VXR models were complete hooligans and the diesel versions reliable and economical. Small wonder the Corsa became a fixture in the UK top ten best selling cars.

Lasting right through to 2015 has been one marathon innings for Vauxhall's baby and in recent years, the Corsa has started to feel its age. Newer rivals like the Volkswagen Polo, the Renault Clio and the Peugeot 208 have all queued up to join the Fiesta in attempting to give the Vauxhall a good working over, so General Motors probably think it's payback time.

The Corsa has always been a pretty entertaining steer and Vauxhall is looking to continue that trend. Underpinning this latest fourth-generation car is a completely redesigned chassis with precisely zero carry-over components from the last model. It sports a 5mm lower centre of gravity, a stiffer front sub-frame and a sharper suspension geometry. The electrically-assisted power steering gets a City mode for you to twirl around effortlessly when parking, but receives a UK-specific tune to cater for our roads. Internal friction has been minimised, as has understeer. Both Comfort and Sport suspension set-ups have improved dampers that aid ride quality.

Star

The star of the Corsa's engine range is the 1.0-litre, three-cylinder turbo petrol unit. Recognising that diesel engines don't always make the big sales numbers in the supermini sector, Vauxhall has instead devoted its attention to super-efficient petrol units. The 1.0-litre is the only production three-cylinder engine on the market with a balancer shaft, helping it combat noise, vibration and harshness. This Euro6-compliant engine is offered on either 90 or 115PS power outputs and both manage 170Nm of torque at just 1,800rpm.

An improved version of Vauxhall's 1.4 turbo engine is also featured and there are two budget naturally-aspirated petrol engines – a 1.2 and a 1.4-litre. Big improvements to the 1.3 CDTi diesel have elevated it to Euro 6 emissions standards. Transmissions? Vauxhall has announced two six-speed gearboxes, a manual and an automatic, delivering greater efficiency and a slicker shift action.

Straightaway, you'll spot similarities to the front end of the ADAM model and that's no coincidence, this looking set to become the Vauxhall family face for the foreseeable future. That means a rounded, friendly look with a broader front grille than Corsas of old. The overall proportioning isn't that much of a departure, this car retaining the somewhat tall and narrow shape of the third generation model. It's almost identical in length to that car too but all of this improved model's body panels are new and provide greater definition between the 'sporty' look of the three-door and the 'premium' five-door models. Some of the detailing is quite assured, including the sculptural 'blade' running across the lower door-sections.

Drop inside and you'll see even bigger improvements. The old Corsa always felt a solid thing but time hadn't been kind to the basic design of the interior and this latest model rectifies that quite emphatically. A driver control centre takes pride of place within the instrument panel, which is themed around horizontal lines. The fourth-generation Corsa is also the first high-volume Vauxhall to be available with IntelliLink, the communications system which has already been seen in the ADAM.

The Corsa operates in a section of the market that, while headed by the Fiesta, has been turned on its head by the rise of Korean models such as the Hyundai i20 and the Kia Rio. Put bluntly, if your car isn't generously equipped right down to the entry-level model, it's going to face an uphill task. Vauxhall has announced a whole slew of equipment for the Corsa to make sure it is.

Prices are much as before across the three and five-door range, starting at around £9,000, with trim levels running from 'Life' to 'Sting', 'Sting R', 'Design', 'SRI', 'SRI VX-Line' and 'SE'. Plus there are the inevitable special editions too, so you'll not be short of choice.

All models get features like a heated windscreen, remote central locking, powered front windows and mirrors, a decent quality stereo with an aux-in socket and hill start assist to stop you drifting backwards on uphill junctions.



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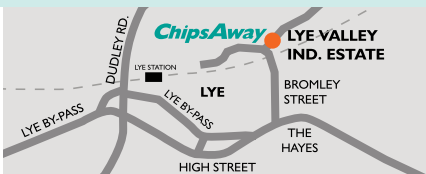
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DRIVETIME



Boost to Bridgestone team

Bridgestone's north region senior management team has been significantly boosted with the addition of an industry-respected sales and marketing director to head-up a new business development role.

Guy Jones brings a wealth of automotive experience to the new Bridgestone management team. He started his career with Land Rover developing Range Rover, then became global brand manager at Bentley, playing a key role in the development of the Continental GT.

As marketing director of Kia he established the company as a volume brand in the UK and most recently

he has led the commercial team to successfully re-launch MG in Europe, making it the fastest growing automotive brand in the UK in 2014.

Guy's main objective will be to manage the delivery of a number of key projects as part of a process to transform the sales and profitability of the European business, working across the commercial and consumer divisions in the UK and Ireland as well as the Nordic regions.

The business development position represents a new role in the business and a 'final piece in the jigsaw', where Guy will work alongside sales and marketing directors Farrell Dolan (consumer) and John Folliss (commercial), reporting to managing director Robin Shaw.

Guy said: "I have joined the global number one brand in the tyre and

rubber business so naturally, I am delighted.

"I am looking forward to working for a business that is not only strong in the passenger car segment but also light commercials, motorcycles, agricultural, off road and truck and bus."

"I have been really impressed by the culture of the people here and their levels of commitment."

"I have certainly sensed a good degree of positivity here which is a great base from which to start."

Guy also sees great potential in Bridgestone's sister brand Firestone, with a host of exciting sales and marketing plans already planned for 2015.

"Firestone represents an exciting proposition and there are ways to leverage the brand which, in turn, can transform the sales and profitability of the European business."



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funeral services

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1

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CELEBRITY WOBURN electric recliner, excellent condition, £250 ono. 01384 395614.

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2

Leisure Time

caravans / motorhomes

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07800 823395.

AVONDALE ARGENTE 6 berth, twin axle touring caravan, 2007, awning, extras, excellent condition, £6,750. For more information please telephone **07789 265323.**

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BAILEY PAGEANT Bordeaux, 2002, fixed bed, motor mover, serviced, excellent condition, £4,800 ono. 01922 440392/0778 567787

BAILEY RANGER 2007, 2 berth, end washroom, motor mover, awning, plus extras, ready to go. £5,500 ono. 01902 689748.

BAILEY SENATOR 2002 twin axle, 25ft, fixed with rear bathroom, shower/toilet, fly-screens/blinds, ba heat, water tank, inc, alco hitch, no pets/smokers. All paperwork. £5,450 ono. 07708 982 218



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MUST BE SEEN

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5 Business & Farming

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6 Property

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7
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13,100 miles, MoT, immaculate
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cars under £1500

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BMW 325 TDS SE diesel, 1995,
MoT good condition, 0995, 07864
842076.

DAEWOO MATIZ SE, 2001, 72,317
miles, silver, electric windows, elec-
tric mirrors, MoT, alloys, reliable,
economical, £550 ono.
07912 746207

FIAT PUNTO SX 1999, 1200cc,
MoT, stereo/CD player, good con-
dition, reliable, ideal first car, £450
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FORD FIESTA 1.2L, 1997, 56,000
miles, white, 12 months MoT, SH,
FSH, excellent condition. £1,395
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months MoT, perfect runner, £1,
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58,500 miles, MoT Nov, met blue,
FSH, excellent condition. £1,395
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NISSAN ALMERA, 1999, 89,000
miles, metallic red, abs, air bag,
electric mirrors, long MoT, pas, CD,
£450, 01384 232586.

PEUGEOT 206 XSI, 1.6, 2004, 65k,
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and out, £1,200 ono.
07526 096831.

FORD FIESTA ZETEC, 2003,
94,500 miles, silver, electric
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locking, pas, alloys, CD, £1,650
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IMMACULATE

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Just 16,000 miles.
One lady owner.
Less than 12 months old.
10,950.

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/Wolverhampton area.

IMMACULATE

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alarm, MoT, CL, one lady
owner, PAS.
Excellent condition.
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diesel, slight scrape on front
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£3,500 ono.
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green, last of pop up head lights, 1
lady owner, FSH, full MoT, great con-
dition, £2,750 ono. 07904 861894.

MERCEDES C180 Kompressor Ele-
gant SE auto, silver, 03, 105k,
MoT, All electric. Lovely car, £2,495
ono. 07405 196046.

NISSAN X TRAIL, 06, 110,600
miles, silver grey, four wheel drive,
air con, alarm, MoT till July, manual
2.2L Diesel, Codsall, £3,200.
07814 465080.

PEUGEOT 206CC, 2003, 64,000
miles, silver/blue, fab car, immacu-
late condition inside and out. Runs
perfectly, £1,800 ono.
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TOYOTA YARIS 1.3 2005, 84k, lady
owner, MoT Oct 2015, alloys,
excellent condition. £1,995 ono.
01902 258138 or 07446 072217.

PEUGEOT 307 1.6 PETROL

53 plate, 5 doors, sun yellow,
black interior, stereo, alloy
wheels, Sun roof.
MoT December 2015. FSH.
Air Con. Electrics.
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lady owner.
£1,250.
07462 428888.

RENAULT CLIO 1.2 Dynamique, 54
reg, 3dr, low miles, long MoT, CD,
EMI, EW, £1,395. 07779 455916.

RENAULT CLIO DYNAMIQUE
1100CC 53 reg, MoT Aug, excel-
lent runner, tidy condition, ideal 1st
car. £650. 07984 297114.

RENAULT CLIO EXPRESSION 1.2
2002, 76,500 miles, FSH, MoT,
sunroof, cambelt, black alloys,
very good condition, reliable,
low cost.
£1,295 ono.
07912 844155.

RENAULT SCENIC 1.6, 03 plate,
70k, good condition, New Cam belt
and water pump, genuine reason
for sale. £975 ono. 07933 919920.

ROVER 1.8 TURBO 2003, 53 reg,
silver, 3 months MoT, 85,000 miles.
£1,000 ono.

Vauxhall Astra R reg, 5dr, 1.4,
82,000 miles, 9 months MoT, good
runner and good body work. £450.
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VOLVO V70 ESTATE, 2000, red,
MoT, black leather interior, alloys,
CD, towbar, s/h, 22,000 miles,
£250. 01562 883198.

VW PASSATT 2.0, 2003, MoT till
November 98,000 miles, clean car,
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9
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Informationpublic & legal
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Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended)
The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England)
Regulations 2012

Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended)
Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council

Notice of consultation of Supplementary Planning Documents

Public consultation on:

• **Draft revised planning obligations supplementary planning document (SPD)**

The SPD sets out detailed guidance on Dudley Council's
requirements for Planning Obligations, for all those involved in
the submission and determination of planning applications. The
review of the SPD has been undertaken to reflect changes in the
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) regulations and national policy.

• **Draft renewable energy supplementary planning document (SPD)**
The SPD aims to assist land-owners, developers, builders and
other relevant stakeholders in relation to renewable energy
proposals and to clarify how Policy ENW7 - Renewable Energy in
the Black Country Core Strategy (2011) should be applied.

The documents are available for viewing from 13 March until 24 April 2015 at:

- Reception at 4 Ednam Road, Dudley, DY1 1HL
(Mon to Fri 8.45am to 5.00pm)
- Dudley Council Plus, 259 Castle Street, Dudley, DY1 1LQ
(Mon to Fri 8.30am to 5.00pm, Sat 9am to 12 noon)
- All main public libraries in the Dudley borough (opening times
may vary)
- www.dudley.gov.uk/environment--planning/planning/local-development-framework

Comments can be submitted via email to localplan@dudley.gov.uk or via
post to: Planning Policy Section, Dudley Council, 4 Ednam Road, Dudley,
DY1 1HL.

Only comments made in writing by 5pm on 24 April will be considered.
Comments should specify the matters to which they relate and the
grounds on which they are made. They may be accompanied by a
request to be notified of the adoption of the document.

For more information call 01384 814136 or
email localplan@dudley.gov.uk

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Directorate of Environment, Economy & Housing

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Men seeking women

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Familiar faces stay in place at cricket club

HALESOWEN will have familiar faces in key positions at the club in the coming season.

The Club held its AGM last week where the mood was upbeat.

The principal officers were elected unopposed to serve a further year, both the first and second team captains, Faisal Shahid and Adam Hawker will lead their teams for a second successive season.

Treasurer Paul Cutter presented the meeting with accounts which show a substantial increase in turnover, due in no small part to the excellent results achieved since Donna Tromans took over as Club Steward.

Cutter said: "Some £65k has been invested in the facilities at the club in the last three years."

The opening Birmingham League fixture for the 2015 season takes place on Saturday April 25 when the first XI travel to Tamworth while the seconds are in action at Seth Somers Park.

The previous two weekends will see warm-up fixtures for all four sides.

Pre-season work on the ground at culminates with the NatWest CricketForce weekend.

The nationwide event brings club members and willing volunteers together to complete larger projects or even just spring clean the outside areas and buildings.

Having been the recipient of a substantial grant last year from Sport England's Inspired Facilities fund which was directed towards the refurbishment of the club lounge, this year's effort will see Hales' members concentrate on the playing area, surrounds and changing rooms.

A promising start fizzles out for Hales

**Old Halesonians 2nds 5
Bromsgrove 2nds 35**

OLD Hales started this cup game promisingly.

They spent much of the first 20 minutes in the Bromsgrove half. Following several unsuccessful attacks, Jon Harris and James Mitchell combined down the left and from the tackle on Mitchell the ball popped out for Andy Tromans to score.

Bromsgrove came back strongly and shortly after landing a penalty to make the score 5-3, a swift attack down the left released their outside centre who outstripped the Old Hales defence to score a try.

Although Hales had their chances in the second half, Bromsgrove had the better of the half and regularly stretched the home side's defence to score five unanswered tries.

Old Hales get comfortable win

Old Halesonians 55 Burton 19

STILL smarting from the narrow loss to Bromsgrove the home side needed a comfortable win and bonus point, Hales started strong and got into their stride.

Although Burton threw down the gauntlet for about five minutes, Hales gained the upper hand. Hooker Pete Fitzgerald picked up after 10 minutes and made ground into the Burton half.

A resulting scrum saw the pack drive the visitors over their own line for No.8 Dan Young to score a try.

Scrum half, Greg Smith found Matt Williams who went on a customary jinking run for 40 metres, he fed the ever-present skipper for the day, Tom Jordan

who cruised in for the second try. On 20 minutes the pack took another scrum against the head on the half way line, giving Carl Robinson a break, he chipped the defenders and won the race to the ball for the third try, converted by fly half Gareth Bown.

It took only five minutes from the restart for Bown to receive the ball from another strong scrum, in the middle of the field on the visitors 22. Bown glided through the defence for an uncontested bonus point try which he converted.

The pressure from Hales continued with driving runs through Tom King, Loz Breese and Jordan. The home scrum continued to dominate with Burton resorting to infringement and a yellow card. The

resulting Scrum saw them force Burton backwards to give away another Penalty. Carl Robinson quickly tapped and crossed the line.

In the second half Hales relaxed at a Burton penalty quickly taken. The player found a gap and sprinted half the pitch to score an unconverted try. Hales came straight back as Andy Robinson found space to put wing Smith away for a great try.

Andy Robinson powered through for a try, converted by Bown. The home side then became complacent with Burton capitalising with their second converted try.

The visitors gave away s penalty try, converted by Bown. Luke Smith grabbed the final home try.

Albion's next two games are crucial

Man City 3 Albion 0

AND now for the defining three weeks of Albion's season.

Baggies fans endured a dismal afternoon at the Etihad Stadium on a bizarre day of dogged, futile defending and refereeing blunders.

But Tony Pulis and his players now face two weeks of preparation followed by two games in eight days that could see them complete their survival mission.

If they can make the most of those two huge home games on their return from the international break, then a thoroughly miserable afternoon in Manchester will be forgotten.

Saturday's match always had the look of a bonus game for Pulis and Co. In the end they never even threatened to pull off a shock, despite lots of tireless work.

The key for their head coach will be to help his players consign a grim experience to history as they gear up to face QPR and Leicester in back-to-back Hawthorns games that provide the opportunity to put their survival bid to bed.

Thankless

The game always seemed likely to stretch Pulis's side to the limit because a thankless task that degenerated into the most one-sided spectacle many observers could remember.

Sadly, a combination of player absences, defensive frailties, a lack of Albion ambition and City's sheer attacking riches made for a thoroughly miserable experience all round.

There are times when statistics can mask the true story of a game. On Saturday, the facts and figures painted a perfect picture of a good, old-fashioned hammering.

City enjoyed 78 per cent of possession and registered an incredible 43 shots to Albion's three. They had 16 efforts on target with their visitors drawing a blank and the pattern of the game was consistent.

Lone striker Saido Berahino spent much of his afternoon on halfway with Vincent Kompany and Eliaquim Mangala while the rest of the players from both sides were camped in and around the Baggies penalty area.

Just how much attacking intent Albion would have shown with 11 players we will never truly know. But once they were reduced to 10 men be-



Joleon Lescott joins an Albion attack during the match against Man City at the Etihad Stadium

fore many fans had even settled in their seats, the task became one of damage limitation.

They achieved it fairly successfully but only thanks to an inspired display from goalkeeper Boaz Myhill prevented a City side racking up a huge score.

Myhill had already made several smart saves when the hosts went ahead on 27 minutes.

A shot from Fernando deflected into the path of Bony, who was played onside by Chris Baird and com-

pleted a crisp finish. It was 2-0 five minutes before half-time, thanks to calamitous Baggies defending. Jonas Olsson made a hash of clearing a high ball, James Morrison could not react quickly enough to bail him out and Fernando prodded home.

Craig Gardner's corner was flicked on by Olsson and Berahino headed against the bar from a yard out.

City made it 3-0, when substitute Stevan Jovetic's shot was deflected in by Silva.

Late Swans goal sees Villa still in danger zone

Villa 0 Swansea 1

BAFETIMBI GOMIS' late strike clinched a deserved win for Swansea as Villa failed to climb away from danger.

The forward bagged his sixth goal of the season with just three minutes left as the game looked to be heading towards a stalemate.

Gomis had been denied twice by Brad Guzan and Wayne Routledge had a shot cleared off the line as the Swans made most of the running at Villa Park.

Gabby Agbonlahor was denied by Neil Taylor in the first half but Villa struggled to create and remain three points clear of the Premier League relegation zone.

Boss Tim Sherwood rued the late loss, and said: "That's the second time it's happened now, against Stoke in my first game it was a little later but it was disappointing to lose in that manner."

"I think we deserved a point. They were better than us in the first period and in the second we looked the most likely to score."

"There comes a time in the game where, if you're looking like not winning it, you have to make sure you don't lose it. Unfortunately we've done that twice now. It was a good break and they have done us with pace, it was a race to the ball in the middle and Gomis beat us to it."

"It's a set-back but we'll pick ourselves up, we'll be all right."

Swansea boss Garry Monk insisted Gomis after his first strike since collapsing at Tottenham earlier this month – the result of a vasovagal condition which causes low blood pressure – has fully recovered. Gomis won it in the 87th minute.

Albion ladies make it to the women's final

**SC Albion Ladies 2
Copswood Coventry 1**

SPORTING Club Albion Ladies have reached the Women's County Cup final, with a 2-1 victory in extra-time over Copswood Coventry.

Steph Smith's 116th minute strike sent Albion through to their first final in the competition since 2012/13.

Albion took the lead in the first-half through an own goal, but Copswood grabbed an equaliser shortly after the break.

With the game heading for penalties in extra time Smith popped up to book her team's place in the final.

SCA Ladies will now face Coventry City at Nuneaton Town's Liberty Park on Thursday, May 7, kick off 7.30pm.

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Comfortable win
for Old Hales
Page 39

Albion's next two
games are vital
Page 39



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Brummies take out Heathens

CRADLEY suffered their first defeat since April 2014 as Birmingham snatched a spectacular 46-44 victory over their rivals at Perry Barr.

Having stormed to a spectacular 63-27 victory over the Brummies in the first leg of the Travel Plus Tours Challenge, the Heathens were expected to cruise to another comfortable win.

However, they ran into a spirited Birmingham side and were stunned by a late onslaught from their co-tenants which saw them grab a dramatic last-heat triumph.

A stunning display from talented young reserve Ellis Perks was not enough to lead the Heathens to victory.

Having bagged a paid maximum on his debut last week, the 18-year-old romped to 16-point haul including victory in the penultimate race to give his side a slender advantage heading into the last heat.

Yet the imperious Adam Ellis and former Heathens favourite Tom Perry blasted clear of Perks and Max Clegg to steal an incredible victory much to the dismay of Will Pottinger's side.

Cradley were hit by the loss of Luke Harris with an ankle injury following a nasty collision with Zach Wajtknecht in heat six, whilst Arron Mogridge twice hit the deck when in scoring positions.

Despite their defeat, Cradley did leave with the Dan McCormick Memorial Trophy courtesy of a comprehensive aggregate win.

Cradley face Coventry Storm at Perry Barr on April 8.

CRADLEY 44: Ellis Perks 16, Max Clegg 9+1, Matt Williamson 7+2, Nathan Greaves 5, Michael Neale 3+2, Arron Mogridge 3, Luke Harris 1.

BIRMINGHAM 46: Adam Ellis 14+1, Tom Perry 12+1, Sam Chapman 7, Zach Wajtknecht 6+1, Adam Kirby 4, Alex Wilson 2+1, Harvie Banks 1+1.

Cycle club sets up new academy to boost young riders

HALESOWEN cycling club has announced the launch of its junior academy for 2015, featuring three home-grown riders, Sam Dighton, Herefordshire racer Patrick Potheringham and Stourbridge's Charles Walker.

The three young cyclists are second year juniors, and all raced strongly against senior opposition in 2014, with Walker landing two wins, and Potheringham one.

The trio have all been developed through Halesowen's club coaching system which caters for young riders from eight upwards.

Halesowen road team manager, former Milk Race cyclist Dave Viner said: "We have run a strong and successful road team for several years now, with riders going on to race for national-level teams, and the academy is a natural addition to that."

"Giving additional support to talented and committed juniors from within the club will benefit them massively at a key stage of their cycling careers."

For more details visit www.halesowen-cycling.net.

Clock is ticking on Ideye's fitness

ALBION striker Brown Ideye has revealed he faces a race to be fit for the Baggies' crucial clash with QPR at The Hawthorns on April 4.

The Baggies' record signing is unsure whether he will be ready to face Rangers after missing Saturday's 3-0 defeat at Manchester City with a knee injury.

Ideye was also forced to abandon his Nigeria comeback after earning a recall for his country's games against Uganda and South Africa.

Now he is focusing on recovering to face Chris Ramsey's Rangers in the first of Albion's back-to-back home games against the Premier League's bottom two. He said: "I am in rehab now so hope-

Football

fully I will be better before the QPR game game.

"I just have to work with the doctors and the physios and hopefully things will get better in time.

"Somebody kicked me from behind in the Stoke game and since then I've been getting pain.

"I spoke with the gaffer and said I didn't think I could play so I just have to rest it and get good treatment.

"I thought I could be fit for Nigeria. I thought I could even be fit for the game at Manchester City

but the game was still there and I couldn't run so I just had to stay back instead of risking it by going to internationals and coming back.

"I just have to rest. The pain is still there but with the doctors and physios we have doing their best the should make sure I'm fit for the game."

And Ideye revealed his disappointment at missing out on an international return after two years on the sidelines.

The 26-year-old said: "Every player wants to play for his country and since 2013 I haven't had a great impact for my country so I feel bad about pulling out."

"But there are many more games ahead."

Prospects for Tipton in jeopardy

Tipton 2 Brocton 4

BROCTON'S 4-2 away victory at Tipton has left the home side's Midland Premier status in jeopardy.

Town, now five points adrift at the bottom, put in a stirring midweek performance at second-placed Coleshill Town when only a last-gasp goal saw them lose 3-2.

But this was a below-par effort in which they lost direction and purpose.

They were behind after only two minutes, Sam Bell squaring the ball across the home penalty area and Carl Morris hitting a superb drive beyond keeper Jack Hayfield.

Eight minutes later, Tipton's prospects became even bleaker when Bell was allowed to make too much progress and comfortably notched the second.

Tipton were a shadow of the exuberant side of midweek, but in the 16th minute were thrown a lifeline when sloppy play by the visitors let in Gurjit Singh who drew keeper Calum Barrett before rifling the ball home.

Morris was booked for handball when claiming a goal in the 19th minute, but two minutes later Tipton mounted a telling assault and Singh levelled from a tight angle.

Both sides had chances in the early part of the second half, but it was Brocton who settled the better to their game and they regained the lead in the 65th minute when Bell forced the ball home.

The Badgers missed the chance of a fourth on 81 minutes when David Berks, with only Hayfield to beat, missed wildly.

But the respite was short-lived. Three minutes later Brocton were awarded a hotly-disputed penalty.

Despite considerable commotion, Berks converted.

Delph is likely to overcome illness

VILLA star Fabian Delph is expected to link up with England later this week despite struggling with illness.

The midfielder remained at home on Monday with a sickness bug but should be fit for the clashes against Lithuania and Italy.

Meanwhile, Belgium will continue to assess the fitness of Christian Bentekeas the Villa striker continues to struggle with a hip injury.

The 24-year-old striker limped out of Villa's 1-0 defeat to Swansea with a hip injury but did travel to meet up with the national squad ahead of Euro 2016 qualifiers with Cyprus and Israel.

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YELTZ STUNNED BY LATE GOALS

Halesowen Town 3 Whitby Town 3

HALESOWEN looked to be on course for victory but had to settle for a point after Whitby stunned the hosts with two late goals.

The Seasiders also caused an early 3rd minute shock when David McTiernan struck the opening goal into the bottom corner from 20 yards.

Halesowen pushed forward in response and equalised in the 29th minute after Aaron Daniels turned well to cross for leading striker Iyseden Christie to bury a close range header into the opponent's net.

Daniels was then put clear in the 36th minute but rolled the ball agonisingly wide of the target before striking the side-netting three minutes later.

Halesowen seemed to have comfortably wrapped up the points with two further goals early in the second half but The Seasiders had other ideas and weren't going to roll over.

Tom Tonks blasted home after another Daniels effort was parried away by Shane Bland in the 49th minute and Whitby captain Mark Robinson headed a fine cross from Aaron Griffiths into his own net after 51 minutes.

Advantage

But Whitby didn't give up as the Yeltz uncharacteristically let their two goal advantage slip.

Steven Snaith poked home a scrappy 81st minute goal to make it 3-2, although Halesowen still looked set for all three points as Christie's 83rd minute volley was clawed away by Bland.

However, the last word was Whitby's after a 90th minute free-kick was only cleared as far as Robinson and he drilled home a low equaliser to leave Halesowen without a win in nine games.

Halesowen Town: Sargeant, Green, Griffiths, Forde (Downes 55), Hull (c), Tilt, Charlton, Tonks (Heard 78), Christie, Daniels (Haseley 88), Bragoli.

Unused Subs: Watson.

Whitby Town: Bland; Hassan, Robinson (c), Burgess, Pell, McTiernan, Waters, Shepherd, Snaith, Nolan (Clark 61), Mason.

Attendance: 411

Jordanne among the winners



Wheelchair tennis star Jordanne Whiley from Halesowen

HALESOWEN'S Jordanne Whiley was among three British winners at the Pensacola Open Wheelchair Tennis Championships.

London 2012 bronze medallists Whiley and Lucy Shuker teamed up to win their second women's doubles title this season, with Gordon Reid clinching victory in the men's singles and doubles.

Shuker and Whiley made it two women's doubles titles in their last two tournaments together after the top seeds edged out Dutch second seeds Marjolijn Buis and Michaela Spaanstra 7-6 (9), 7-6 (3) in the final, to add the title to the USN Bolton Arena Indoor event they won last month.

World No. 10 Shuker and world No. 5 Whiley made fine starts to their singles semi-finals as they attempted to set up an all-British singles final.

But after taking the opening sets of their matches against top seed Sabine Ellerbrock and third seed Buis, both Brits bowed out after narrow defeats.

"To end the tournament with another doubles title with Lucy when I wasn't playing my best all week is very satisfying," said Whiley.

"After our London 2012 bronze medal it's great to make it two from two this season as we work towards Rio."

"It was an up and down tournament for me."

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